

25
Divine Improvement,

OR,

The Christian Instructed

Duties,
How to make } Dangers,
a right use of } Deliverances.

Both as they concern himself and others;
Opened and applied in several SERMONS.

By NATHANIEL WHITING, M. A. and Minister of the
Gospel at Alawinckle.

Vol. 94. 17.

A work very suitable for all sorts of Christians, and very
seasonable for these times.

1 Tim. 4. 8. *Exercise thy self unto Godliness.*

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Both as they occur in nature and in culture.

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Divine Providence

The Year

100 N. 1st St., N. Y. 10001.

*To the Ransomed ones of the Lord;
with all that in every place call
upon the name of Jesus Christ our
Lord.*

Dear Friends:



A Hen, with my own people, I thank-
fully owned before the Lord, an
eminent Deliverance from an
imminent Danger. I then entred
upon this Discourse, which was
suited to that Providence: And
having often reflected upon that signall mercy,
duely considering the opportunities of doing
and receiving good, which I have had, since
that gracious reprieve from death, I have since
drawn up my Meditations, which then were
short, suddain and confused, into a more en-
larged, orderly, and methodicall Treatise: I do
not cover the applause of men, nor court your
Acceptance with strains of wit, an affected Elo-
quence, new lights put into a dark Lanthorne,
or Seraphicall Notions, high and sublimated, but
present you with a plain and practical Discourse,
desiring to speak from the heart to the heart. The

The Epistle

The Treatise is Tripartite, thereby resembling the heart, which is Triangular; and 'tis my single designe, to endeavour, that upon the points or corners of your hearts may be engraven your Dangers, Deliverances, and Duties; that so the mercies of God, which are Records of greatest Import, may be preserved with greatest care, and you may be provoked to act with greatest Confidence for God.

We cannot look back upon *Adam* in his lapsed Estate, but we may see a deluge of wrath breaking in upon whole mankind, at the breach of the first Covenant; we cannot read over our own Diaries, but we may read our own Dangers, drawn up in black Characters of our sins, as provoking God unto displeasure against us, nay, the times that lately passed over us, presented us with danger, from the sword of men in the heat of warr; and now are we in daily hazards from the arrows of the Almighty, in various and violent distempers.

Again, we cannot seriously study the Gospel, but our great Deliverance from wrath to come, by the precious blood of our Crucified Jesus, presents it self unto our view, nor can we considerately survey our own Soules, but we may read the counterpane thereof, transcribed by the Eternal Spirit; nor own Experiences, but we may meet with large Volumes of eminent Deliverances, personall and Nationall, wrought for us by the outstretched arme of an Almighty God: Again, if we turn over those holy leaves of

to the Reader.

of the Scriptures of Truth, if we consult the Experiences of Gods people in the Ages that are past, or seriously advise with our own spirits, when, in a right frame, we shall finde many Duties charged upon us, as our returnes to God, for our great Deliverances : The great God will not be a loser by his mercies, he expecteth some incomes into the bank of his glory ; if he have it not from us, he will have it out upon us ; If we do not give it, he will take it. Deliverances are a great Talent put into the hands of men to trade withal for God ; They that lap up this Talent in a napkin by forgetfulness, or squander it away by unsuitable actings, heap guilt upon their own soules, and shall be sure, at the reckoning day, to finde this sin, *as the Israelites did an ounce of their golden calf*, in all the rebukes of God upon them : The sad Consideration whereof, hath been, and is much upon my heart, and hath been a principall inducement, to thrust this Treatise into the world, which is not Polemical in the main intention of it, *my Standard bearing this Motto, L O V E*

Zech. 8. 19.

THE TRUTH AND PEACE ; nor is it provoking, I hope, to any, being the product of that *wisdom*, which is *first pure, then peaceable*, &c.--- I have avoided all bitterness, that I might not stir up any prejudice : my business is to be a Remembrancer from the Lord, unto you, and to provoke unto love and good works, as the genuine improvement of grace and mercy received.

I have

James 3. 17.

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I have not exactly methodised this Treatise, nor cast it into the mould of the Title Page, but laid down all Sermon-wise, handling the Saints Dangers and Deliverances in the Doctrinall, and their Duties in the Applicatory part of it; in which, I have respect, as well to Spiritual, as to Temporal Dangers and Deliverances, and with respect to all, as they stand in a personall or Relative capacity.

I will not *Cramben bis coctam dare*, by Epitomizing in the Epistle, what is largely pressed in the body of the Discourse: I shall therefore onely entreat you, to bewail before the Lord, that root which bringeth forth wormwood and gall amongst us, that discontent and fullness of spirit, by means whereof God is not owned in, nor honoured for those glorious vouchsafements of mercy, which have been matter of envie and astonishment in all the Nations about us; that land-flood of corrupt Principles and practices, which, like a swift and spreading Torrent hath laid a great part of the Nation under water; that spirit of bitterness and enmity against Godliness in the power, and Religion in the purity of it; and those sad divisions about, which sadly hinder the work of a thorough Gospel-Reformation, &c. all which are *some grapes*, yea *clusters of Gomorrah*, and not such a Vintage, which the Lord might reasonably expect from a people of such rich mercies, such signal preservations, and under the enjoyment of such encouraging advantages as ours have been: O that

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O that your souls would mourn in secret places for these things! O that you were so affected with them, that you would refuse your pleasures, bread! O that you would so reprove a carnal and careless Generation of men, by your lively acknowledgments for God, that many, yea all, who have experienced the goodness of the Lord in eminent preservations, may glorifie the name of the Lord by an Evangelical conversation, that so the presence of God may still give us rest, that our English Zion may be made an Eternal Excellency, a joy of many generations, that our walls (through the divine Custodieney) may still be called Salvation and our gates praise. But though this spiritual Lethargy be incurable in many, yet be ye, (O ye Ransomed ones of the Lord) awakened unto duty, and let the sense of mercy, in the eminent appearances of God to your help, in the daies of your distress, carry you like wind and tide, full sail in your zeal for his Glory; in order to which, I shall humbly offer these hints unto you, and I entreat the people of my own charge to take special notice of them, as being mainly intended for them.

1. Be frequent in your reviews of those feared dangers and fretting distempers, those painful sicknesses and perplexing sorrows, from which the good Hand of God has fetcht you; gather up your dangers and deliverances, your pressuress and preservations, how the Lord has granted you life and favour, life with the comforts

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Job 10. 12. *his visitation has preserved your spirit; has secured your lives in the midst of many dangers, which surely have been many from infancy to gray hairs; that so you may visit him in duty, who hath so often visited you in mercy: there are frequent visits past betwixt friends: God is your best friend; acquaint that day lost, wherein you do not visit him and keep up sweet communion with him. It was a gallant speech of a Marquis of brave man; accursed be that man, who values the wealth of the world worth one daies communion with God; and act up unto David's pattern,*

Psal. 34. 2. *I will bless the Lord at all times, &c. I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me out of all my feares*, which were many and lay hard upon him, when he changed his behaviour before *Abimelech*, and acted the part of a mad man, which so sober a person as *David*, would not have done, had not his fears been strong and his faith weak.

2. Get your Spirits tinctured with a deep sense of that darkness which was upon you, when day first broke upon your souls, what desperate courses you were engaged in, and out of what company the Lord pluckt you, with whom ye were folded, as thornes, before conversion; own the conduct of that providence, whereby you have been led from *Beth-haven* to *Beth-El*, from profane places and societies, into such families, such fellowships, and Congregations, where Religion has been owned, family

ly-duties carefully observed, Sabbath-strictness advanced, the Word spiritually dispensed, and holiness has been contended for, whereby a saving change has been brought forth in you; or you have been more built up in faith and holiness. Let the consideration of what you are, compared with what you have been, be much upon your spirits, that you may with thankfulness adore the riches of that mercy, by which you have been differenced, as to present grace, and hope of future glory, from the profane world.

3. Keep up your first love to Christ, and your first hatred to sin: Yonge converts have usually strong affections: Those sinners which have been *Peccata in deliciis*, which have had most of the heart, are most upon the conscience, most in the confession, most in the holy mournings, and are most the abhorency of new Converts. Again, such is their sense of differencing mercy, that they are all Love to God, and all Zeal for his glory; you may read this in the gallerie of the *Ephesians* spirit, *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou Auctentius* Apoc. 2. 2. 3. *caust not bear them which are evil* (either passions *nunquam a-* in thy soul, or persons in thy society) &c. --- *a lind quam* high strain of Love! the stream must needs be *rit, quia* strong that turns all these wheelles; it argues a *Arrianns.* great force of affection, to draw out the soul into all these noble actions for Christ, but as a well-kindled fire abates in heat and light as the fuel wastes; or as a passionate lover remits of that

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that violent affection, when the person beloved has been some time enjoyed ; So it fareth with these *Ephesian* Christians, they *left their first love, the love of their Espousals*, and so became *Apheists*, remiss, and careless, possest with a spirit of sloth and indevotion : O let not this charge be drawn up against us, *that the candlestick may not be removed from us !* What attempts have been made to un-church, un-fab both, and un-gospel us, and how signally the Lord has appeared, for us, you know ; O remember that strength of zeal, that warmth of spirit, that height of love to God, his truth, ways, and people, those sighings, prayings, fastings, fightings, &c. that were amongst us, when the yoke was loosed from our necks, and when a doore was first opened unto us for Religion, and Reformation in the long Parliament : Labour therefore to keep up your first abhorrence of sin, and your first affection to Jesus Christ.

4. Cherish an high esteem of Gospel-ordinances : Remember *how pretious the word was then unto you, when visions were scarce*, how you blessed God for it, and rejoiced in it, when you *ran to and fro to find it* ; how your feet stood in the house of the Lord, and you *flew as Doves to their windows*, swiftly and in flocks, when Pulpits began to be filled with zealous, spiritual, and conscientious Preachers ! O let not this Manna lose any of it's sweetness upon your tastes, now that you have it in so much plenty

Mr. Trap.
n loc.

to the Reader.

plenty : Bread, if wanting, is called for, though the table be heaped with dishes. The word is bread to all creature-comforts, 'tis that which makes them noble and nourishing. O then be often in the galleries with the King, drink deep of his spiced wine, feed freely of those dainties which are prepared, and served out by the Eternal Spirit : When you here a Sermon-bell, think you hear a voice from heaven, calling you in the words of Divine Herbert,

Cant. 7. 5.

Come hither all, whose taste

Is your waste

Save your cost, and mend your fare,

God is here prepar'd and drest,

And the feast

God in whom all dainties are.

You know and lament the negligence of some, and the wantonness of others : thin Congregations and empty seats, is not the complaint of a simple Minister, Still desire the sincere milk of 1 Pet. 2. 2. the Word, that you may grow thereby. Do not wean your selves from the breast, whilst you are in a growing estate, and never think you are past growth, until you be come to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, which state of perfection, Scripture and your own experience, duly consulted with, will tell you, is not attainable on this side Heaven.

Ephes 4 13

5. Maintain an evangelical brotherly love amongst

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amongst your selves; Love is the greater Gospel Soder and Cement; a characteristical note of Christ's Disciples, without which, the highest

1 I c. 3. 14. pretence to piety and profession is under cens-
15, 16. sure by the Holy Ghost; O how did Christians

cling together in times of trouble! What friendly entertainment did Saints find in the hearts and houses each of other, when they were forced from their dwellings by an enraged enemy? how did the old Primitive and puritan love begin to spring up and flourish in *England*? And now, that we have no enemy to quarrel with, will you needs quarrel one with another? What an unsuitable return is this unto the God of Peace, for his astonishing mercies and preservation? Ah friends, well may the Lord take this ill from his people, after such notable deliverances as ours have been; it was a good with of an Heathen *Vitam inimicitie mortales, amicitie immortales essent*, and I with the same, that your friendships were immortal, your enemies mortal, that your dissensions like to

Livye.

Jonas his Gourd, might die at the root in one night, and that *Brotherly love might continue as a Teyle-tree and as an Oake whose substance is in a Teyle-tree*. O then, preserve this evidence for heaven un-blurred in your souls, that you may know, you are passed from death unto life, because you love the Brethren: let love be without dissimulation; love not in word and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth; it is easy to make them two, who were never truly one, to make them

1 Ioh. 3. 14. them.
verf. 18.

them foes who were never truly friends, to keep them off from *being one bread*, who were never one body. And in case of difference, *leave your gift at the Altar*, not leave the Altar, that's not the mind of Christ, and goe and reconcile your selves: There is a memorable story of *Aristippus an Heathen*, who out of his own accord to *eschine his enemy*, saying, *shall we not be reconciled, until we become a Table-talk to all the Country?* To whom *Eschines* replied, that he would gladly be at peace with him; remember therefore said *Aristippus*, that although I am the elder, and the better man, yet I sought first unto thee, thou art indeed said *Eschines* a far better man than I, for I began the quarrel, and thou the reconciliation: O stand not upon punctilios, but goe thou and do likewise, you know the sad fruits of contention; where a tear-fire is, the bells ring backward; So, where this fire breaks forth in fellowship and fraternity, Religion is Retrogrades, all things go backward and run into disorders; Communion is broken, Prayer is hindered, mutual edification neglected, Brotherly admonition will not be borne, the weak are offended, and the mouths of the wicked are opened wide in reproaches and calumnies.

6. Preserve ones self in Judgment: beware of dividing opinions and dividing in opinion; Labour for stability in judgement, for rooting in the faith: It's a great honour to be standing Christians in falling times: be much and serious in searching the Scriptures, much and serious in exami-

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CAUT. 1. 8. examining your grounds of profession : Look often to your foundation ; be true to your own experiences, and recede not from your approved principles : *follow the foot-steps of the flock, keep close to the Sheapheard tents, conform to the purest times, the most primitive and Evangelical practises : do not hastily leave the good old way : meddle not with those that are given to changes in fundamentals, Doctrinal or Practical : Error, as one saies, is a whirl-pool, first turns men round, and then sucks them in : He has no sure standing, who leaves the top of the hill. Islebius Agricola, the first Antinomian, at last turned Papist. How gradual has error been amongst us ? unto what a monstrous bulk is Heresy now grown, both as to persons and opinions, which but a few years since was hardly visible ? now low did some begin, who now are mounted upon the highest Pinacles ? O then, stop the first leak, least the Ship be immersed ; quench the first sparks, least the maister-timber become a flame ; not onely keep, but contend earnestly for the faith, which was once delivered unto the Saints ; we are the trustees of Jesus Christ, the treasure that is committed to our trust is very pretious, above the vaule of heaven and earth, in the account of the great Trustee ; and that's an obligation to faithfulness, we are not to look onely to our selves, but to posterity, to that Doctrine which is transmitted to them : one generation teacheth another ; and as we leave them Laws and other National priviledges ;*

Iude 3.

to the Reader.

ledges, so it would be sad, if we should not be as careful to leave them the Gospel. O then, as the Church is terrible as an army with banners, so is she beautiful, when she marcheth orderly under the Standard-Royal of truth, and surely, if we remember, how we have rejoiced in the salvation of our God, and, in his name have set up our banners, when formidable Armies were drawn up in great fury against us, we cannot but charge blame upon our selves, if we should forsake his Colours, and fly to the painted Pageants of the Prince of darkness.

7. Let not evil root in your hearts by the love of money: *Lay not up your treasures upon earth, lest they keep your hearts too much out of heaven; seek not great things for your selves, with the neglect of greater; Let not friendship with the world, put you into a state of enmity with God:* Remember what a friend God was unto you in the midst of your late straits and dangers: How little a value you set upon your stocks and lands, your shops and trades, in the heat of the late dreadfull Warrs, how *they that rejoiced were as though they rejoiced not, they that bought, as though they possessed not;* and will you now doat upon the world, and *put any trust in deceitfull riches?* What a sad preface is this of another War? what a blemish upon Professours? what a Reproach upon Religion? There is no sin so contrary to a true Saint, as earthly-mindedness, whose Conversation ought to be in heaven, his inheritance lying there; O
d then

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then, roul away this reproach from you; be content with food and raiment, though none of the finest; time was, when you would have valued peace, and the Gospel, as choice mercies, though with course dress and Diet; make shift a while, ere long, you shall be *cloathed with long white Robes, clean and fine, and shall drink of that wine, which shall be ever new in the kingdom of your Father.*

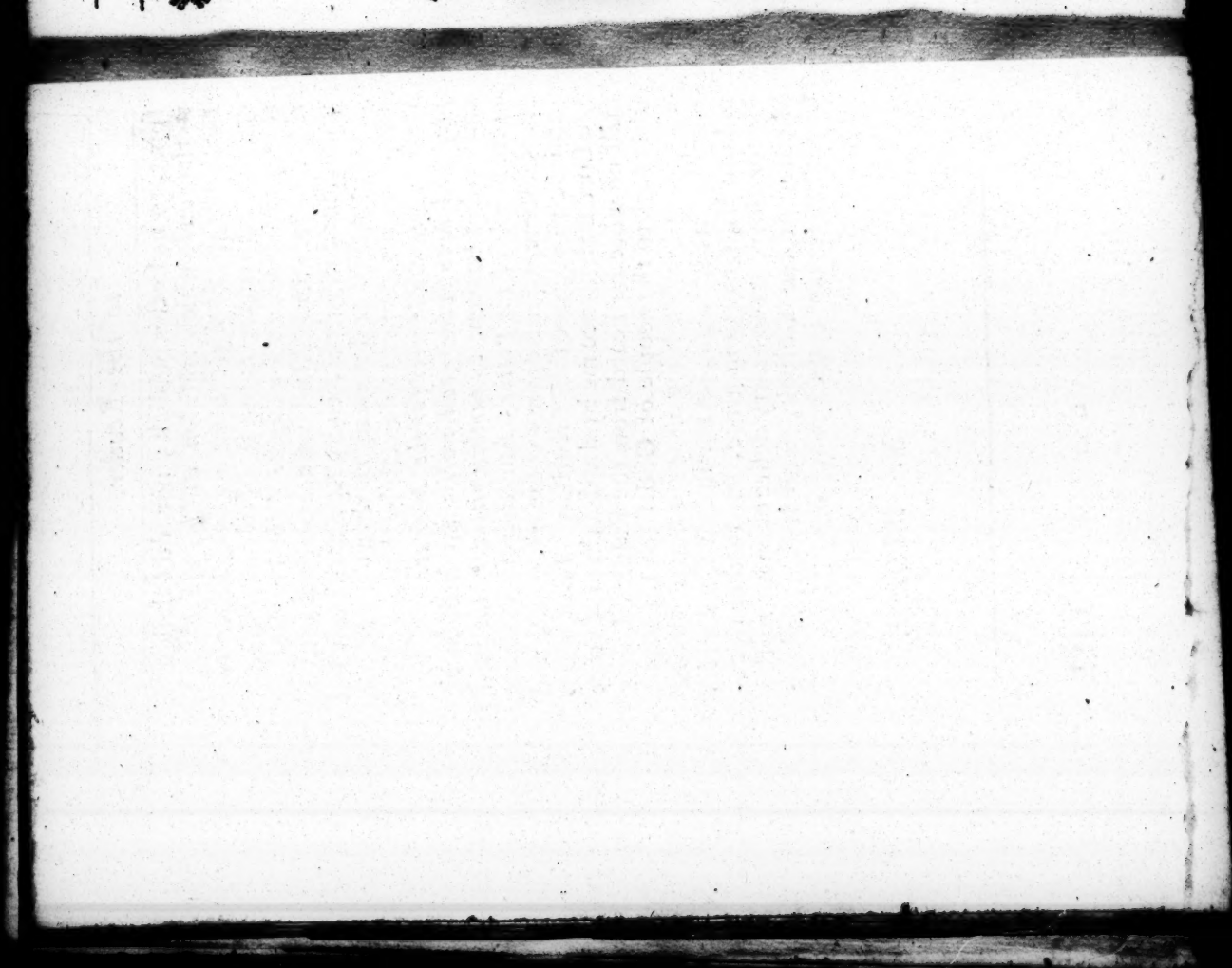
8. Lastly, Be most intent upon the *quatuor novissima*, the *four last things*; Let your thoughts be much spent upon death, these dying times, by way of preparation, that it may come without a sting and terrour to you; of Judgment, by way of preparation, *judging your selves here, that you may not be judged hereafter of Hell*, by way of prevention, waiting for, and making sure your Interest in Jesus, *who will deliver you from wrath to come.* And of heaven, by way of prelibation, tasting the peace, joy and comfort of that blessed Estate, living upon the foretastes of heaven; living up to the holiness of it, *and giving all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure*, that as the Lord hath given you an earnest of his mercy, in temporal Preservation, so the Lord may give you the full Treasures of his grace in everlasting Salvation.

To shut up all, (And indeed 'tis time), for according to the Rules of Architecture, the two porches of it are much too big for the building;) my witness is in heaven, that I covet not the applause of men, I am not carried on by a popular spirit,

to the Reader.

spirit, to makethis publick; nor do I designeit to that end, which *Abſalon did his pillar*; *The 2 Sam. 18.*
Lord, I truſt, hath given me a name, better then
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wherein many honourable veſſels, that were *ſan-*
ctified, and made meet for the Maſters uſe, and 1 Tim. 2. 21.
prepared unto every good work; are broken by
the hand of heaven, as *earthen pitchers, the work* *Lam. 4. 2.*
of the hands of the Potter; And therefore, I have
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ſtudies, to prepare this Treatiſe; That, when
the Lord ſhall ſilence me by death, that my voice
ſhall no more be heard from the Pulpit, I may
ſtill ſpeak to the people of God from the Preſs,
who are a people lying near my heart, whoſe
Stability in the Faith, Union in Love, Progreſs
in holineſs, Growth in grace, and further ripen-
ing for glory, is the hearty deſire of an unworthy
Minifter of the Goſpel, who is yours and the
Churches, ſervant in the Lords work,

N. Whitinge.





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7 N --- 7 ' 2 -- 7 N

OLD & ACOB's ALTAR
newly Repaired :

O R
THE SAINTS TRIANGLE
of Dangers, Deliverances and Duties.

Text : PSALM 94. vers. 17.

Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had
almost [or quickly] dwelt in silence.



His Book of the *Psalms* hath been
honoured, (and that deservedly)
with high Commendations by the
Antients, being termed, *The Soul's*
Anatomy, *The Law's Epitomie*, *The*
Gospel's Index, a little Bible, *The*
Summary of both the Testaments, being
alleged, or alluded to, eighty four
times or thereabouts, in the *New Te-*
stament, as one observeth, A sweet
Field and Rosary of Promises, Precepts, Predictions,
Praises, Soliloquies, &c. A Physick Garden, richly fur-
nished with all sorts of healing plants and Medicinal
herbs,

herbs, suited to all the Spiritual distempers frail man is incident unto. The holy Pen-man (being a person of choice spirit, and of large experiences) meeteth with all the conditions of all the Saints in their state of militancy; so that, out of them, as out of a Storehouse, every Saint may meet with rich supply, suiting his respective condition, and his addresses to God; still finding much of his own estate in some *Psalm* or other, as though the spirit of God spake *de se, & in re sua*, of him, and in his particular case, (As *Abrahamus* observeth) containing the Characters and Representations of his thoughts, meditations, affections, and workings of spirit towards God, towards man, towards himself, throughout our all the changes of his Pilgrimage, in this present of the Bible; world: The Apostle *James*, Chap. 5. ver. 13. gives this general advice, *Is any afflicted, let him pray, Is any merry, let him sing Psalm's*: Lo, here is the bread of mourners, for sad spirits, and here is the oyl of gladness for merry hearts; here are healing portions for all heart distempers, and cordial waters for all sinking spirits, yea choice experiences to strengthen fainting souls in the day of their distress, more pleasant then the pools of *Hesbbon*, more glorious then the Tower of *Lebanon*, more redolent then the oyl of *Aaron*, and more fructifying then the dew of *Hermon*, as once expresseth it; and amongst many *Psalmes*, though this hath not the title *Mictram* of *David* affixed to it, to wit, *A golden Psalm*, or *David's precious jewel*, yet it is as the first borne among many brethren; from a very small parcel whereof, viz. ver. 17. we may consider a double acknowledgment,

An Epitome
of the Bible;
or, a little
Bible, as
Lucifer
calls it.

1. Of imminent danger, { 1. By the nearness of it.
set forth 2. By the greatness of it.
2. Of eminent Deliverance, { 1. The reasonableness of it. } of Help.
in two considerable 2. The sufficiency

Which Considerations will appear to be very genuine, and to be the plain meaning of the Prophet, if we take the Text in pieces, and examine each word apart.

1. Except

1.

1. *Except the Lord*, or if the Lord had not stood by me, and appeared in the very nick of time, this implieth the seasonableness of help; the Lord usually reserving his hand for a dead lift, as that passage, *Psal. 124. vers. 1, 2, 3. If it had not been the Lord, who was on our side, now may Israel say, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick: the word is used, Psal. 119. vers. 92. Unless thy Law had been my delight, I should then have perished in my affliction*; which was the Lantgrave of Hessen's support; Melancthon reporteth, that he told him at *Dresda*, *That it had been impossible for him to have borne up under the manifold miseries of his so long imprisonment, nisi habuisset consolationem ex verbo divino in corde suo, If the Word of God had not brought in consolation, into his heart.* Joh. Manl. loc. comm. pag. 139. alledged by Mr. Trap. in *Psal. 119. 92.*

2.

2. *Had been my help*: the word signifieth, not only, *Help*, but *sumum & plenum auxilium*, an *helpfulness*, or *full help*; the Hebrew hath a letter more then ordinarie, to encrease the signification, as learned Mr. Leigh observeth: There is the sufficiency of help.

3.

3. *My soul*, i. e. my life, the word in the *Heb.* being often translated *life*, of which the soul is the spring and fountain, as *Job 2. vers. 6.* The Lord saith unto Satan, *Behold he is in thine hand, but save his life.* I give thee full commission against the body of my righteous servant *Job*, to fill it with diseases and disempers, (as he did it to purpose) but not to take away his life: This argueth, the greatness of *David's* danger, his Life had dwelt in silence, that is, his life had been gone, and his dead corps had been laid in the grave; as *Psal. 115. vers. 17. The dead praise not thee, neither any that go down into silence*; Hence the Latines call dead men, *Silentes*, silent ones.

4. *Welshigh*, or *almos*: The word signifieth, A little space of time or place, as if he had said, so near was I unto death, that there was but a minute, or hair's breadth betwixt me and it; a parrallel place, (though upon a

B 2

spiritual

spiritual account,) you have, *Prou. 5. vers. 14. I was almost in all evil, quasi parum, or parum absuit quim--* or within a little of all evil : This sheweth the nearness of the danger ; so that the Psalmist speaketh after this sort, If the Lord had not seasonably and fully appeared to my help, so great and unavoidable was the danger, I was just dropping into, I had been a dead man, and my dwelling had been in the quiet and tenebrous cloysters of death.

The Text thus opened presenteth you with these three Observations :

1. Observation.

I. *That the Saints Exodus to heaven is through a red sea, and a wilderness.*

Obs. 2.

II. *That the people of God are sometimes cast upon such streights, that seem to cut off all means of relief from them.*

Obs. 3.

III. *That the appearances of God are eminent, and immediate, to the rescue of his people in their greatest streights.*

I shall speak to the two first but sparingly, and be more copious and enlarged on the last, the prosecution whereof is mainly intended : And take up the former in the Applicatory part of this Doctrine,

Doctrine 1.

That the Saints of God do meet with many dangers, and much adversity in this life.

Their Exodus to heaven is through a red Sea, and a wilderness. Psal. 34. vers. 19. Many are the troubles of the righteous ; The Account of their sufferings riseth very high, the gross sum of their affliction is very great : Isa. 43. vers. 2. they must pass to their Land of rest through fire and through water. Acts 14. v. 22. We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God : Plana via ad patriam caelestem est crux. The ready way to heaven is the Cross-way. If there be any way to heaven on horse-back, surely this is the way, saith that blessed Martyr, The stones were not set into Solomon's Temple until hewen, neither is the corn laid up in the garner, until the flail hath passed upon it. Flesh-pleasing formalists take up a delicate Profession, thinking to divide betwixt Christ and his Cross, coasting about in their wilde and roaving thoughts to finde out a way that will bring them to the Crown, and yet baulk the

Malcolm.

Mr. Bradford.

the Croſs; but alas, their miſtake will one day ſadden their hearts when they ſhall read their preſent folly, in their future diſappointment: Thoſe whom *John ſaw in the viſion of the Spirit, Apoc. 7. ver. 14. clothed with long white robes, ſtanding before the throne of God, and of the Lamb, are ſaid to come forth of great tribulation*; implying, they had been in great affliction, they had all their ſhare of breaking Oppreſſions: This is a truth confirmed by the joint Teſtimonies of all ages, and handed down to us, writ in the blood of many precious Saints.

1. Then they that argue the certaintie of future bleſſedneſs, from their preſent worldly happineſs, and conclude that God loveth them, becauſe they abound in thoſe things which are beloved by them, do reckon without their Hoſt, and muſt one day (ſore againſt their wills) be conſtrained to reckon again: The *Kick man* Luke 16. found it otherwiſe, *He was clothed with purple and ſine linnen, (then which the beſt wore no better,) and ſaved ſumptuouſly every day, (every day was a gaudie day to him) ſecond and third courſes ſerved to his table; yet verſe 22, 23. This Kick man dieth, was buried, and turned into hell, where he had miſery without mercy, ſorrow without ſuccour, pain without pleaſure, Apoc. 14. ver. 10. had wine of Gods wrath without mixture, Apoc. 14. ver. 10. had judgement without mercy: Oh that all cruel Oppreſſours, and hard hearted Miſers could conſider this in time, that ſuffer many a poor *Lazarus* to ſtarve at their gates! Oh! the time is drawing nigh, when they ſhall be ſnatch'd from their full bowles, and full barnes, from their heaps, and their hoards, and ſhall be tumbled into hell, from whence they may ſee deſpiſed *Lazarus* above in the boſome of *Abraham*. Think of that unmerciful Courrier, *Chriſtopher Landſale, who ſuffered a poor Lazer to die in a ditch by him; And he himſelf (by the juſt hand of God) dyed in a ditch alſo*. God ſometimes payeth unmerciful men in their own coyn, amongſt whom the depopulating encloſer leads the Van, *Iſa. 5. 8, 9, 10*. Hence, they are aſleep, who dream of an earthly *Paradiſe*, or an eaſie Religion, as a *M^c 2. 2.* means*

meanes to arrive at that heavenly one, and fancy a Profession without persecution; *a rose without prickles, and a lily without thornes*; Saint Paul sayeth otherwise, Rom. 8. vers. 18. *I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time, concluding the present time to be a time of suffering, and that all the day long, ver. 36. the whole course of a Christian's life is but a slaughter time; or the whole day of the Gospel may be termed a slaughter day: In Dioclesian's time, 17000 Christians were slain in the space of one moneth: In the Parthian Massacre 30000, in as little space; and within the year 300000, as hath been computed: And how fitly doth that sad story of the Christians of Calabria agree with this passage of the Apostle; for being thrust up into one house together, as into a sheepfold, the executioner cometh in, and taketh one after another, leading them to a larger place, where he cutteth their throats, with his butchers knife, untill he had slaughtered them all, to the number of Eightie eight persons, even as the butcher preparerth meat for the flames.*

Acts and
Monuments;
fol. 859.

3.

3. Hence then, they are below the name, at least, have not the magnanimous, the great mindes and gallantry of Christians, who cast of Christ when the Cross appeareth; that not onely throw off their cloaks, but their coats also, when the sun of persecution beginneth to scorch them: and they also are blameworthy, who discover a whining and pettish spirit under afflictions, crying out with Baruch. Jer. 43. ver. 3. *Wo is me now, for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow, I fainted in my sighing, and finde no rest; as though all was lost when the yoke presseth heavie upon them; whereas, that one Consideration, Lam. 3. ver. 39. may stop the mouth for ever, Wherefore doth living man complain? a poor clod of clay? alive, on this side the grave, and Hell, and complain? and quarrel with God? what equity is there in his complaints? what reason hath man to murmur? when as man is punished for his sinnes? Man that complaineth is guilty of many sinnes, the wages whereof is death; nay, afflicted man who cihgtheneth his sufferings, was ever grief like mine? did ever*

ever any meet with such Crosses, disappointments, hard speeches and hard dealings, as I meet withall? Oh! this man that complaineth now on earth, might ere now have cried out in Hell: He that weepeth on earth, might long since have wailed in hell; and he that gnasheth his teeth against God for his present sufferings, might have had gnashing of teeth in endless and easles torments; Oh then! *Wherefore doth living man complain?* Oh! this is a quiting Consideration, to keep down all impatient rickings of heart against God, in a day of distres, and will lead out the spirit to submit unto, and trust God, in the greatest freights: For, as it followes, in the second head of Doctrine,

The Saints of God do sometimes meet with such distresses, Doctrine 2. that cut off all hopes of deliverance from man: Reason is at a stand, heart and flesh fail; carnal policy is at a los; all proud helpers stoop in vain: yea, Faith it self beginneth to flagge, Thus Gen. 21. vers. 14, 15, 16. Hagar with her sonne, are cast out of Abraham's family, and are now in a wilderness, a place inhabited onely by wilde beasts; their stock of provision spent, and no supplies to be had; What then? what couns will Hagar take? why the layeth down her beloved boy under a bush; And what then? she goeth a distance from him, not being able to bear his dying groanes, and cries; and having emptyed her bottle of water, she seeketh to emptie her moaning heart by teares; seeing nothing but the death of her Sonne, as knowing no way to prevent it! a great distres! a sad freight! but not her case alone: Many of the Saints of God have come to the emptying of their bottles, to cases of utmost extremitie; a parralel case was that of the poor widow, 1 Kings 17. vers. 12. her whole store was spent, and markets shut up, as to new supplies, a handfull of meal in the barre, and a little oyl in the cruse, was her whole livelihood, and she is now gathering a handfull of sticks, to bake one cake for herself and her Sonne; and what will she do when that cake is eaten? did she see relief coming some other way? no, these were her

her thoughts, she and her sonne would eat that cake and die: It were easie to multiply preferencies of this kinde upon both accounts, temporall and spirituall; freightes of bodie and pressures of spirit have been matter of the Saints complaint.

1. Oh then ! thou that art a servant of the Lord, who hast not been brought into these freightes; upon whom such a day of distress hath not been, but findest the incomes of the spirit, dost take in comfort from the promises, walkest in the light of God's countenance, and hast the candle of the Lord shining upon thy Tabernacle, as 1 *Kings* 1.6. *That best been the Lords Adonijah?* Oh ! charge it home by the way of thankfulness upon thy heart, that the Lord should lead thee unto the land of rest, and not by the way of the wilderness.

2. Let thy bowels yearn toward the distressed of the Lord: pity them, pray for them, and administer seasonable supplies of comfort to them; *considering thy self as being in the body*; especially let thy heart go out in tender compassions towards the afflicted in spirit, to those who are brought into soul freightes, whose case runneth parallel with that of *Heman*, *Psal.* 88. ver. 3. *My soul is full of troubles*, is satiated with evils, hath its fill, is brimm'd up, yea, running over, and these so pressing, that *my life draweth nigh to the grave*, and then, *vers.* 8. *I am shut up, I am a prisoner*, under restraint; I, but it is *libera custodia*, *he may go forth with his keeper*; no, I cannot go forth, Oh ! tis a sad thing to be a close Prisoner, to be so shut up that he cannot steppe one foot beyond the grate, to take any contentment in the creature, any delight in outward enjoyments, or any comforts in relations; Ah, but *Heman's* case is far sadder, he is so shut up that his spirit cannot go forth in prayer, to fetch in comfort from the Promises, nor healing from the Spirit, nor life from Jesus Christ, nor pardoning mercy from the God and Father of mercies: nor evidence of Electing love, nor assurance of Redeeming grace, nor demonstrations of Adopting grace; nay, nor satisfying and

Ech.

and soul-quieting conclusions of truth of grace, but *free amongst the dead, like the slain in the grave, whom God remembereth no more*; Dead to duty, *'dead in duty*, dead from duty; spirit dead, and heart dead, affections dead, desires dead, comforts dead, hope dead, faith dead, yea all dead: Oh! this is sad above what words can express, only the heart knoweth its own bitterness: yet this day of distress hath been upon many precious Saints: Oh! then draw forth the breasts of consolation to such sad souls, *Stay them with flagg'ns, comfort them with apples*: And let this give you encouraging hopes of success in all your applications, that the appearances of God are eminent, and immediate in the day of his peoples greatest distress, which is the main point I pitch upon, as being the chief scope of the Text.

Doct. 3. *The Lord comes in often with seasonable and suitable mercies in times of greatest miseries.*

He loveth to be seen on the Mount; to be a present help in the needful time of trouble, to help when none else can help; when refuge faileth, and hope is nowat the giving up the ghost. See that *Gen. 21. vers. 17, 18.* When *Hagar's* tears were highlest, and her faith lowest (as too oft is seen, that when fear is up then faith is down) when death was coming, and life going, when the water was spent, her patience spent, and all spent; when she had received the sentence of death within herself, for herself, at least for her son, whom she had given up for a dead child: Then, then God heard the voice of the lad, and calleth unto her, and biddeth her lift up the lad, yea her own faith and hope, and spirit, (for there was an universal sinking in her) and telleth her he will make him a great Nation; as if he had said, Fear not the life of the lad, for there are many lives bound up in his life; if I should let him perish, I should lose a Nation, yea a great Nation; and that distrustful thoughts might not arise in her heart, God openeth her eyes, and the saw a Well of water, and gave the lad drink: Let us pitch down a little upon this Quotation, for it is a place

place of pleasant springs, and draw these Observations.

1. *That the goodness of God is a springing fountain unto the Saints, even in a wilderness, Psal. 107. 35. There is a living water in this fountain, Psal. 36. vers. 9. With thee is the fountain of life; There are living of providence, and springs of promises, both which do send forth refreshing streams unto the Saints: There are always supplies in the Lords storehouse, such cordials in the Lords closet; yea, he can and will create deliverances for his Jacob, though Hagar was at a loss, yet God was not, though the ground was dry to her, yet God can bring up springs of water through the secret veins of the parched earth: Oh! there is much support in this, due to improve the Omnipotency and All-sufficiency of God.*

2. *That the Saints themselves, sometimes have their eyes so shut up, that they cannot see the springs of Gods love, sometimes the heads of these springs lye to deep and low, that they are not visible, either in promises or in providences: Nay, when they are open and run, yet in some cases, the Saints eyes are closed, that they cannot see them; all seemeth to be dry ground to them: Indeed these fountains are shut up to the unbelieving world, all ways sealed to the wicked; so great a stone is rolled by an Almighty arm upon the mouth of this Well, that all the strength of nature cannot remove it, to dip a bucket in it; but to the faithful it is always open, they need no Jacob to roll it away. See that Zeck. 13. vers. 1. A fountain opened to the house of David for sin, and for uncleanness. This great Gospel fountain, the blood of Jerusalem, is open to believers, to them that dwell at Jerusalem for the Spirit, not in the letter of profession. Now if this great Fountain be open, which feedeth all the lesser springs, referring to the blood of the Lord Jesus, then sure no lesser springs shall be shut up to them: He is the fountain of Gods love, the Wells of living waters, Cant. 4. vers. 15. What a precious privilege is this, to have all Gospel-springs open unto us? yet here is our misery, and*

and it is very great, though the springs be open, our eyes are sometimes shut; now what is a spring of water to a thirsty traveller, if he see it not? But you will say, How shall the Saints get their eyes opened?

3. *God alone opens the eyes of his people, that they may see these open Fountains, that they may let in those streams from Lebanon:* Hagar saw not the fountain, neither could she, until God opened her eyes; *He that opened the heart of Lydia,* Act. 16. *vers. 14. opened Hagar's eyes:* Jesus Christ who hath the Key of *David*, can openly open and shut eyes by his anointing Spirit, *2 Cor. 5. vers. 18.* This is true in the first work of conversion, *Acts 8. vers. 12.* So also, in the passage of after comforts, *2 Kings 6. 7. The Lord opened the eyes of the young man that he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha:* The providences and protections of God, do circumsvallate and encompass the faithful; *His Angels encamp round about them;* yet the Lord must open their eyes, else they cannot behold them: A truth falling in with our own experience; how many amongst us, saw not that wall of fire which hath been round about us? nor those Chariots of fire which have been to eminent a protection unto us, in times of greatest danger? But,

4. *God will open the eyes of his people, to behold these springs of mercy, when they stand in most need of them:* What had it been to *Hagar* if her eyes had been opened to have seen many Wells of water when she was in *Abraham's* family? or if she had been in a land of fountains? but to be in a wilderness in a land of drought; to have the water in the bottle spent, and knew not where to fill it, nor how to keep her lad alive without supplies of water; and then in this straits, to have her eyes opened to see, not a little water in a pitcher to fill her bottle once with, and no more; but to see a Well, a spring of waters, where she might have constant supplies: Oh! this was a seasonable, and therefore a welcome mercy to her; this was life to her self, her son, and to her hopes of posterity;

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safety; Oh this is marvellous sweet, and an excellent means to get up the heart in sinking times and conditions.

6. Her eyes are opened, shee seeth the Well: What doth she now do? why she obeyeth the voyce of the Lord in filling her bottle with water, and giving the lad drink; this teacheth us, *That it is the duty of Gods people to lay hold n^o offers of mercy from the Lord; to close in with, to own, and improve, the providential dispensations of God for good unto themselves: What, is she in a wilderness? her bottle-store spent, a fountain opened, and her eyes opened, and doth she sit still? is she fullen, or is she pettish, because supplies came not her own way, or at her own time? will she not dip her bottle in the fountain, because it ariseth in this, and not in that plat of ground? doth she stand upon such niceties? no, no, but presently she snatcheth up her bottle, and goeth to fill it: A commendable practise! Oh! what we see her do, do we likewise; in all our frights, let us haste to the Throne of grace, and when mercy is offered, help seasonably tendered, let us imbrace it, and improve it; when Christ opened that fountain of grace, shewing the wounds in his hands, and in his side to *Thomas*, presently he runneth to the fountain, and dippeth his bucket in the Well, acting faith by a personal application, *My Lord, and my God*, Joh. 20. vers. 28. So when the Lord openeth his Mercy-fountains to us, and our eyes to see them, let us not onely sip a little, but fill our buckets, *yea* brim our bottles, *drawing with joy and thankfulness of heart* water out of those Wells of salvation, *Isa. 12. vers. 3.* not quarrelling with men or means, but owning the goodness of the Lord, in the seasonableness and fulness of our desires. What, should I mention the Angels staying *Abrahams* hand, when it was lifted up to slay his beloved *Isaac*? What, should I name *Jacob's Mabanaim*, the Host of God which appeared to him, when he feared his brother *Esau*, lest he should slay the mother with her children? or *Joseph* in the pit, or in the prison? or *Israe*l as the*

the red Sea ? what should I say more ? the time would fail me, if I should reckon up, what the Holy Ghost hath recorded of this kinde : How often may the faints, and how many of them may truly speak the words of my Text ? *Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence* : but God appeared, relief came, and deliverance was sent from the Lord, in the very nick of time : Oh ! if God had deferred his help for one hour, nay one minute, nay less then one minute, (if time could be parcel'd out into a lesser moment) I had been undone, life and all had been lost. But you will say, what moveth the Lord to this full and seasonable appearance, for his people in their greatest streights ? I answer,

Reason 1. *Because God sometimes leadeth his people into streights, therefore it is for his honour to fetch them out again* : Some Commanders have been very bold and forward to lead an Army on, but have had little care and skill to bring them off, by means whereof many thousands have been slain in some desperate assaults : but the Lord of hosts will not do thus, he will not fall back with his reserves and suffer his *Uriahs* to perish by the sword of the children of *Ammon* ; he will bring off with safety, when he putteth his own people upon danger : *The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name* : He knoweth the stratagems and postures of warre, and like a brave Commander standeth upon his honour, and therefore will bring off where he leadeth on : *Abraham* had express order from *Jehovah*, to offer up his son *Isaac*, and we see how the Lord stepped in betwixt the cup and the lip, as it were, and biddeth him hold his hand, when it was now lifted up to slay his Son, *Gen. chap. 22*. Therefore *Abraham* called the name of that place *Jehovah-ireh*, *The Lord will see, or the Lord will provide*, ver. 14. *Moses* and the children of Israel received orders from the Lord of Hosts for their march out of Egypt, and had their way and quarters assigned by him, *Exod. 14. ver. 1. 2. The Lord spake unto Moses saying, speak unto the children of Israel,* *that*

that they turn and encamp before *Pe-habireth*, between *Nigdol* and the sea, over against the Sea, over against *Baal-zephon*, before it shall ye encamp by the Sea; What could be more exprest then this? well, what followeth? why, *Pharaoh* with all his host pursuesthem, and having got them up into this cramp, maketh no doubt but the day is his own: and well he might, for if we view the ground, we shall finde them thrust up into a narrow room, and in very sad streights: if they look before them, and think to save themselves by flight, the sea is there, and they have neither bridg nor boats to pass over it; if they think to wheel on the right hand, high mountains are a barcad^s against them; if they think to steal away on the left hand, that cannot be done, for they must climb up high and plain hills, which will give the enemy a full prospect of them: if they think to retreat, and to slip back into *Egypt* by some secret way, that they cannot do, because *Pharaoh's* Army, is betwixt them and *Egypt*, so that they must march through the head-quarters of the enemy, if they attempt that: nay, to add weight to all, they were before *Baal-zephon*, the God of watching, an Idol which the Egyptians had high expectations from, being set at the mouth of those mountains before *Pe-habireth*, to watch the passage, that none might escape without a passport out of *Egypt*: Here *Pharaoh* overtook them, *vers. 9*. These were their streights; and 'tis plain God brought them into those streights; but what? doth God leave them in the lurch? no, God will save them by a miracle, he will make a way in the deep for them: As they marched between mountains of earth before, so they shall march between mountains of water now; and they who feared that their enemies would dig graves for them in the wilderness, do now stand upon drie ground, and behold the whole hoste of *Egypt* buried under two huge mountaines of water; *ver. 28*. and all this the Lord of hosts did, to maintain his honour in point of faithfulness to his people, and to evidence his power in point of omnipotency upon their enemies, as

Moses

Mr. Bar-

rough's

notes upon

Exod. 2 P. 3 C.

Moses upon another occasion argueth it out with the Lord. Numb. 14. vers. 15, 16. *If thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard of the fame of thee, will speak, saying, because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land, which he swore unto them, therefore hath he slain them in the wilderness:* An high impeachment against God, in respect both of power and faithfulness; a charge very dishonourable to the Lord: and therefore the Lord bringeth them off, at least the loyal and obedient ones, with honour and safety, from all those hazards he had led them into. Hence the Prophet David speaketh in the person of the Church, *Psal. 66. vers. 9, 10, 11, 12.*

Rea. 2. *Because sometimes the servants of the Lord meet with troubles in the world, for their love to God, and management of the Lords work;* They speed ill with men for their good will to God; and are sufferers from men, because they will not stand against God; therefore it is that the Lord requiteth their quarrel and taketh part with them: This was the case of the three Jewish-worthies, Dan. 3. vers. 12, 13. they would not dishonour the true and living God, by owning any thing of God in a dumb and dead Idol, and therefore are bound and cast into a fiery furnace; but how speed they? did God suffer them to be cast into that fiery prison, and perish there for his debt? no, God was with them in the fire, and fetch'd them out without one penny damage to them; *their hair was not singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them,* vers. 27. In like sort did wicked men deal with Daniel Chap. 6. vers. 10. and the Lord brought him off without the least hurt: upon this basis the Lord Jesus bought that precious promise Luke 21. vers. 15. *I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist;* and wherefore are the vouchsafements of God so eminent unto them? vers. 12. *because they suffered for his name, and his cause:* which truth hath been more then once attested by suffering saints; so much of the spirit and wisdom of

of God hath been discovered in their answers, that their adversaries and accusers have been non-plussed by illiterate men; nay, filled with astonishment: Thus the Apostle Rom. 8. ver. 36. *For thy names sake we are led as sheep to the slaughter*; and what followeth? why Ver. 37. *in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us, we do overcome, super-juperamus*; if the cause be Gods, we may trust our selves and it in Gods hand, and possess our souls in patience, when we have this assurance, that not an hair of our head shall perish Luke 21. ver. 18, 19.

Real. 3. *Therefore God steppeth in to the help of his, people in their greatest streights, that he may give real testimony of his hearty good will unto them*: that they may know, and their enemies also, that they have a friend who will stick to them in the day of their distress: affliction is the trial of affection, Prov. 17. ver. 17. *A friend loveth at all times,*

* *Helvet.*

[* in all times] that is, in every opportune time; in the fittest season; now the timings of love; the timings of acts of friendship addeth both worth and weight unto it Prov. 15. ver. 23. *A word spoken in season* (in his time, saith the Hebrew) *how good is it?* how good is a word of comfort spoken to a drooping soul in a day of mourning? How good is a word of peace spoken by the Lord to a wounded spirit? and then when its wounds are fresh and bleeding? can any heart, but the heart of Experimentes, conceive, what healings those words of Christ brought to the poor woman, Luke 7. v. 48. *thy finnes are forgiven thee?* being spake at that season, when her heart was poured out, under a deep sense of sinne? Who can calculate what revivings of spirit, the saint-thief felt from that seasonable Promise? *To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise?* Luke 23. ver. 43. being so rightly timed, even in ipso articulo mortis, in the very moment before his death, and when his conscience was both awakened and wounded with sinne? Oh! surely the timing of love doth marvellously add to the beauty of it, and when is it so seasonable as in a day of distress? A cup of cold

cold water with one morsel of bread given to a weary and thirsty Traveller, is more than a full meal at another time : How pleasantly did *Isaël's* milk relish upon *Sisera's* pallate, when he was thirsty ? *Judg. 4. vers. 19.* A small piece of silver given to a poor man when he wanteth to buy bread for his family, is more than a great sum given at a time when his cupboard is full of bread ; *Another is born for adversity*, and sure kindness shewed to a brother in a day of adversity, speaketh up love with the loudest accents : Now, God reserveth his paternal love to such a time, and then he unbofometh himself unto his people, and at such a time his people read the love of God in the most legible Characters ; some drops of love taste sweeter then, and are owned more then full draughts of love at another time : Good *Asaph* experienced and acknowledged this, *Psalm. 73. vers. 25, 26. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee*, None in heaven, none on earth ? No, God is above all in this good mans esteem. How cometh it to pass that God hath such a glorious high throne in *Asaph's* heart ? Oh, saith he, there is good reason for it, and you will say for too, when you know what love and good will God hath shewed unto me. Oh! I was in such a sinking and despairing condition, *That my flesh and my heart failed me* ; heart, and hope, and help, and all were gone, I, but then, *The Lord was the strength of my heart* ; my heart stayed upon God, as upon a firm rock ; the Lord was unto me as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and he is my portion for ever, he hath put in security for my everlasting safety. Oh, behold what manner of love is this? and therefore he draweth up this conclusion, *It is good for me to draw nigh to God*, to rowle upon God in all my streights. These appearances of God do make his love so visible and glorious, that Angels and men may read it, and say, *Behold how he loveth them!*

Again, God doth hereby more engage his people unto him, he Reason 4. maketh them more his own, setteth into their very hearts, and setteth up his royal standard there : There is nothing layeth stronger

stronger engagements upon an ingenious person, then friendship in a day of adversity. *Jonathans* interposures for *David*, when *Saul* hunted for his life, were so powerful upon *Davids* spirit, that he wanted ways and words to exprefs his sense of them; his heart, like a vessel of new wine sought for vent, even when *Jonathan* was dead, 2*Sam.*9.1. He putteth the question, or rather maketh general proclamation, *Is their yet any left of the house of Saul?* What? Is *David* afraid of a Corral in the Kingdom? Would he cut of the whole family of *Saul* to secure the crown upon his own head? No, this is not the ground of his enquiring; but, *That I may shew him kindness*, not a word of revenge, notwithstanding the hatred and hostility of *Saul* their father: But why kindness? Why? he explaineth himself, *For Jonathans sake*; and again he reneweth his enquiry, *vers. 3. To which Ziba replieth, Jonathan hath yet a son who is lame of his feet*: A son of *Jonathan*? thats well, but he is lame, yea lame of his feet, and so serviceable neither in Court nor Campe, fit neither to stand before a Prince, nor to march in the head of an Army. No matter, I will shew the kindness of God unto him, and *vers. 7.* when the lame son of *Jonathan* is brought, *David* said unto him, *Fear not*; it seemeth the remembrance of *Sauls* cruelty, caused a trembling upon his Grand-sons spirit; therefore *David* meets him with a cordial at the very door, *Fear not, for I will surely shew thee kindness, for Jonathan thy fathers sake.* Oh! *Jonathan* was my friend, a dear friend, he hazarded his own life to save mine, and therefore I am obliged to shew kindness to him, even in his posterity; in like manner the hearts of Gods people are drawn out unto him, under the fence of great deliverances: See how *Moses* and *Israel* were up in their spirits unto the Lord, when they were now brought off from Egypt, and beheld their cruel Taskmasters quackened in the red Sea, *Exod. 15. ver. 2. Then sang Moses, and the children of Israel this song, &c. The Lord is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation*: What then? Oh! *He is my God and I will prepare him an habitation*, God shall

shall keep house in my heart, there shall be the dwelling place of the Lord, even of that God who is become my salvation, and thus *Psal.* 116. *vers.* 1. *I love the Lord; my heart flameth out with hot affection to the Lord, and why? for vers. 8. Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling: There's nothing hears and heighens, like unto a lively sense of the mercies of God in a day of distress: The Saints are much wanting to themselves, and more unto God in the neglect of this, did we do this more God would have more of our hearts, and hands too then he hath; the love of Christ would constrain, if we did often read over the story of it, writ in his own blood.*

Lastly, The Lord cometh in seasonably and fully to Reason 5. his peoples relief in the day of their distresses, *That he might blait the hope of their enemies, and give their expectation on the lye, when they look for the down fall of Zion; when adversity knocketh at the Saints door, yea, breaketh in forceably upon them, then is the time cometh that the wicked looked for; the day that they have longed after (for surely the Serpents seed are true to their own principles, they do really define that the name of Israel was blotted out, and that their remembrance might perish from off the earth) This was the language of Edom, in the day of Jerusalem, raise it, raise it, even to the foundation thereof, *Psal.* 137. *vers.* 7. Thus did the Egyptians gape and gaspe after prey, *Exod.* 15. *vers.* 9. I but God cometh in and dasheth their expectations in pieces, yea, beateth out the brains of that *Leviathan*; and thus maketh the hearts of their enemies melt, and run like wax before the fire; and thus God reacheth his great end, which is to make void the hopes of the wicked, *Job* 36.24.25. that all the world may see and say, *There is none like unto the God of Israel; who rideth upon the heavens for the help of Israel, and in his excellency upon the skies; The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are everlasting arms, and he shall thrust out the enemy before them, and shall say destroy them, Deut.* 33. *vers.* 26,27. When the wicked thinks to fall upon them, and*

cut them off in the open field, then the Lord will be a treating place unto them; *the eternal God is their Refuge;* when they lay load upon them, and think to sink them down with pressing calamities; *then underneath are everlasting arms* to bear them up; when they strengthen their league, and think to cut off all supplies; then the *God of Jeshurun, rideth upon the heavens for their help;* when they think to starve them out, and bring in famine among them; then, *The fountain of Jacob is upon a land of cereals and wine*: when they think to stop up their wells of water, and to slay them with thirst; *Then his beaven drops down dew upon them,* the Lord filleth their vessels with rain from the clouds, so that their water shall not fail; thus in all their contrivements, *The enemies are found liars,* and their blossoming hopes are blasted by the Lord; so that the Angels in their heavenly Choe may sing this song of triumph in behalf of the Saints, *Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee O people? saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency.*

Thus have we seen the truth cleared, that the appearances of the Lord, are eminent and immediate in the time of his peoples greatest distress, and the reasons of the point asserted; we shall now gather the Vintage, and express the full clusters of it, to make a cordial wine for fainting Saints in an evil day.

The Doctrine thus cleared and asserted, doth offer us many truths, writ with a beam of the Sun, known and read of all men: As,

108.

1. *That the Saints are a people of Gods special care;* They are much in the thoughts of God, and lye near his heart: It is a truth, God careth for man and beast, he exerciseth a general, and a providential care towards all his creatures: The care of a Creator (like the light of the Sun) goeth through the whole world, *his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the beat thereof,* Psal. 19. vers. 6. All men, yea the worst of men on this side hell, are debtors to God, and owe all their safety to his care, *whose*

is their breath, and in whose hands are all their prayes : But he hath a peculiar and paternal care over the Saints; That Distich of Musculus cometh in fitly.

*Est Deus in calix, qui providus omnia curat
Credentes nunquam, deservisse potest :*

A God there is, whose providence doth take

Care for his Saints, whom he will not forsake.

Saint Paul that he might commend *Timothy* fully to the *Philippians* useth these expressions, *Phil. 2. vers. 20. I have no man like-minded*, he could not finde so choice a spirit, not a man of his minde, he was a *None-such*; and where- in did this singularity shew it self? Why, in this, *who will naturally care for your state*; as principles of nature carry out the Father carefully to provide for the safety of his children : Childless persons drive on a single, and selfish interest, but parents do wrap up their childrens good in all their actings, spending many a careful thought on them, how to render their lives safe and comfortable. So *vers. 20. When all seek their own, and not the things of Jesus Christ*; good *Timothy* naturally tendered the Churches welfare, laying out his thoughts and care how to promote her spiritual advantage : A singular patern; to which the carriages of few men run parallel in these selfish dayes of ours, when the publick is too much drowned, and swallowed up in private interests : A sad deportment, and that which ought to be lamented with tears of blood; Oh ! should the Lord write after this copy; what a woe case were we all in, but here is our comfort, God careth for the righteous, and this speaks his care with the shrillest Echo, that he naturally careth for them, even with the tenderest bowels of an indulgent father : See that 2 *Chron. chap. 16. vers. 9. The eyes of the Lord run too and fro through the whole earth, to shew himself strong on the behalf of them, whose heart is perfect towards him*; his eyes run, implying the celerity and swiftness

ness of God, in hastening relief to his people, *Isa. 31. vers. 5. As birds flying, so will the Lord defend Jerusalem his eyes run through the whole earth*; implying the universality of help, not a Saint in a dark corner of the world under any freights, but the Lord seeth him; nay, *run to and fro*, the providence of God moveth in circuitu, if it be low water now, it will be high water anon, there are tydes of mercy; So *Isa. 49. v. 16. Behold I have graven thee upon the palm of my hands, thy walls are continually before me.*

We read, that the names of the twelve Tribes were engraven upon twelve stones on the breastplate of *Aaron* when he appeared before the Lord, *Exod. 28. vers. 11.* And the shew-bread was kneaded into twelve loaves, being therefore called *panis propositionis*, because it represented the twelve Tribes, and set upon the table before the Lord, *Lev. 24. vers. 5.* to enminde the Lord of his people; We say (and it too often proveth true) out of sight, out of minde; but now, the Saints cannot be out of Gods minde, because ever in his sight; Oh! the care of God toward his people, how great? And oh the comfort of his people from this care of God, how sweet and precious is it? and wherein appeareth this care of God? Why, in his eminent and immediate appearances for them in the day of their distress, hear at what a rare God speaketh, *Isa. 40. vers. 27, 28. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel? my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgement is passed over from my God?* God cannot endure such a distrustful whining spirit in his people; It hath an unhandsome reflection upon God, as though he had remitted, if not cast off the care of his people; therefore the Lord comes on with his high interrogatories, *Hast thou not known? what an ignorant people? Hast thou not heard? what a deaf people? What? keep no intelligence with heaven? That the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary*; his strength is Almighty, therefore he cannot faile; his care is everlasting, therefore hee cannot be weary of helping afflicted ones; how eminent and various

rious was the Lords care in *Jonab's* preservation ? There is a storm at Sea ; *Jonab* is cast over-board , but God prepareth a fish ready to receive him ; but how shall he do for light in that dark prison ? How shall life be preserved in those Chambers of death ? What food must he eat in his three days imprisonment ? How shall he be kept alive so long in the belly of a living fish, and not become meat to the fish ? Who shall open the bars of the gates , and let loose the prisoner ? And who shall waite him to the shore when set at liberty ? Why , God is not weary , he will carry him through all ; what a bundle of miracles are wrapt up together in the preservation of this one Saint ? well might the Apostle perswade the faithful to be careful for nothing, Phil. 4. vers. 6. which (as the Seraphims in *Isa. 6.*) is answered by Saint *Peter* 1 Epist. chap. 5 vers. 9. Cast all your care upon God , under this assurance, that God careth for you : were we not ignorant of Gods care over us ; or low in faith , that we dare not believe his word of promise to us , we might free our selves from much vexing solicitude, and anxiety of minde wherewith we are tormented. It was a noble speech of *John Careless* in a letter to Mr. *Philpot*, *I will now sing care away, for now my soul is turned to his old rest again, and hath taken a sweet nap in the lap of Christ, I have cast my care upon the Lord who careth for me, and will be careless according to my name* : It is our work to cast care, it is Gods work to take care ; let us not then by soul-dividing thoughts take the Lords work out of his hand ; *If the care of all the Churches came upon Paul*, 2 Cor. 11. vers. 28. that it was his every days work with an holy solicitude, to care for them. Oh, much more may we affirm that the Lord careth for all his people, and suiteth his care to all their conditions, to which his eminent appearances for them in a day of distress, give signal testimony.

2. A second truth which this Doctrine commendeth unto us, is this, *That the Saints are a people of Gods special love, they lye in the very bosome of God, his Banner over them is love, and as holiness to the Lord was engraven upon the bells* of

of the horses, and upon every pot in *Jerusalem*, Zech. 14. vers. 20. So love to the Saints, is engraven upon every dispensation of God to his people, even when he rebuketh them he loveth them, because his affection is much toward them, therefore he afflicteth them; *Hear ye the rod saith the Lord*, Mich. 6. vers. 9. Oh, it speaketh love, many of the Saints have read much of the Lords love, writ in letters of their own blood. How doth the love of God shine forth in its fullest lustre, when he appeareth as an healing God in a bleeding hour? Who can express the sweetness of this spiced wine? What a relish of love do the Saints taste in that comfort and hearts-ease, which the Lord giveth them at the shutting up of a storm? The outgoings of God were remarkable, even to astonishment in fetching Israel from the Iron Furnace; there were miracles of mercy, heaps upon heaps, the wisdom and power of God were writ in such capital letters, that they that runned, might read not *digitum* onely, but *dexteram Dei*, not the finger but the right hand of God; and what were the motives to all these mercies? the Lord draweth up all these lines into the center of love, *Deut. 6. vers. 3. Because the Lord loved thy fathers, therefore he brought thee out in his sight, with his mighty power out of Egypt.* So chap. 7. vers. 8. *Because the Lord loved you, hath he brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh King of Egypt*; Love was the bottom which bore all these great burthens; the spring which set all the wheels in going; *because the Lord loved you*: indeed, sometimes the dark side of the cloud is toward the Saints; his love is like the Sun muffled up in a thick mist, or rather as a candle shut up in a dark Lanthorn; that they see no out-shining of Gods favour, as in cases of desertion or great affliction, *Isa. 8. 17.* Sometimes light and love break forth in some small beams, through the thick cloud of apprehended displeasure; that it is with the Saints, as with a traveller, in the duskilke evening or star-light night, when the moon sitteth, *That the light is neither clear nor dark*, Zech. 14. vers. 6. the ship neither rideth

rideth upon high waters, nor yet sticketh upon the shallows : they neither feed high at a feast of fat things full of marrow, nor yet are kept to the bread of mourners, nor wine of astonishment ; their condition is a mixt and middle estate ; hope and fear, sorrow and solace are interwoven ; *as chastened, yet not killed ; as sorrowful, yet in some measure rejoicing, as dying, and yet alive ;* though the air be dusky, yet they can discover some lines of love drawn here and there, in such a mercie, such a favour, such an act of goodness, such a gracious providence : Oh ! saith a servant of the Lord, if the Lord did not love me, he would not have called me off from such vain and vicious courses, he would not have made known the counsels of his grace by his spirit unto me, he would not have accepted my poor services, nor given such returns to my broken prayers, nor halted relief unto me, in such or such an afflicted estate.

Oh ! this is much the case of weak believers, they are often at the turning of the scales ; one while, hope up and fear down, another while fear up and hope down ; and sometime the ballance hangeth in an even poise : It is oftentimes thus in a spiritual fence, and truly 'tis many times such upon temporal accounts, they are much at a loss in their own spirits : But now when the Lord turneth again the captivity of his people ; when he cometh in signally, and seasonably to their help, in the time of their greatest freights, when they could not tell what to do, and thought all lost, Oh then the bright side of the cloud is toward them, *the veil is taken away, and they behold with open face, the glorious love of God unto them* : It is said, *Gen. 45. vers. 27. When Jacob saw the rangers which Joseph sent to carry him into Egypt, his spirit revived, it put a new life into his dead heart, and dead hopes ; the old man gathered up his spirits, which were sunk with grief for the death of Joseph, and fear of Benjamin's miscarriage ; Oh ! saith he, Joseph is yet alive : So when the fains of God see the hand of God visibly appearing, yea mightily out-stretched, to fetch them off* from

from a calamitous condition, their dead hopes and dead hearts revive; now their spirits which hang the head, and were down under the fence of Gods displeasure, get up gain, are fresh and flourishing; *Joseph* my son is yet alive: The Lord hath given real testimony of love and good will unto us; *The arrows of the Lords deliverance like Jonathans passing arrows, are arrows of love, feathered and headed with choicest affections.*

Objec. 1. But this Fort-royal of the Saints seemeth to be assaulted by the Preacher, *Eccles. 9. vers. 1. No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him*: therefore the reliefs God giveth in to his people (when distressed) though signal and eminent, are no demonstrative Arguments of Gods love; he may help and yet hate a people.

Ans. I shall receive the charge, and endeavour to secure the truth within some sconces, and therefore do answer,

1. It is confessed, that the onely wise God doth dispence outward mercies with an equal hand to the good and to the bad, to him that sweareth, and to him that feareth an oath, and this according to the ordinary course of providence: prosperity doth not alwayes spring up upon the root of piety; God doth not dispen-
rence the precious and the vile by sun and rain; yea, many times the worst men live under the warmest Sunshine; *David* saith, *Psal. 17. God filleth their bellies with hid treasures*; they have full meals of the worlds delicacies; riches and honour by the belly, (as our phrase is); and who are these, who like *Pharaoh's* kine are so fat and well-favoured? why? they are the wicked, who like dogs, when their bellies are full, are turned out of doors, *they have their portion in this life, their Cholech, their part and share*; the word is used 1. in a military sense for the souldiers pay, or his part in the spoyles of a conquered enemy, thus *Abraham* calleth it, *the portion of the men that went with him, Gen. 14. vers. 24. 2. It is used in a civil sense, for the share or portion which children have*

have in their parents Estate, *Rachel* and *Leah* said, *Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our fathers house?* Gen. 31. vers. 14. So that, the wife man in this Verse, consumeth the vain, yet general opinion of worldlings, who fondly, and as falsely, measure Gods love and their lot in the same Omer; And in this he ballasteth the Saints, who are apt to topple over, in their own stormes and the wicked's calmes, as *Psal.* 73. 2.

2. The dispensations of God, according to his ordinary rate of providence, do not decisively conclude love or hatred, a just man may have all his moisture drunk up, with the arrows of the Almighty, when the unjust may have his bones full of marrow: the Saint may be poor with *Job*, even to a Proverb, and the sinner may abound with wealth even to the parable: Good *Josiah* may dye the same death, with wicked *Ahab*, both slain by the hands of their enemies: God will not write his love in such legible characters that every pur-blind worldling may read this secret, indeed *Jerusalem* had the honour to be baptised *Jehozababhammab*, the Lord is there, *Ezek.* 48. 35. but this engraving was not found upon *Dives* his palace; *It is the heart not the house which beareth this Inscription, and that not in letters of Gold, but of grace.*

3. No man can give a certain and infallible judgement of love or hatred towards another person, by all that is before him; indeed men may speak hopefully, in the judgment of charity, and draw up a hopeful conclusion of another man's standing in grace, from what is visibly good; when the exercise of faith is vigorous and the actings of the spirit of holiness are visible and uniform, as, *1 Thes.* 1. vers. 3. 4. The Apostle mentioneth their labour of love, their work of faith, and patience of hope in our Lord *Jesus Christ*, from which he deduceth this conclusion, knowing Brethren, beloved of God your election; though the white stone, with the new name written in it, is known to no man certainly, but to him that hath received it, yet holy men, in D. *Prescon.* some degree, are known one to another, to make the communion of saints the sweeter; yet cannot such a conclusion be drawn

drawn from external acts of providence, infallibly to determine love or hatred by his outward administrations; how sadly would the men of that generation have miscaried, if they had asserted *Esau* to have been a person dear to God, and peculiarly in his favour, because he prospered so farre, and fast in worldly greatness and glory, who had four hundred men at his heels, and the father of so many Dukes: and if they had concluded *Jacob* to have been a person of Gods hatred, because he was a poor shepherd, and met with such hard measure, from his uncle *Laban*, seeing the Lord determined otherwise, *Rom. 9. vers. 13. Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*: It was much the sinne of *Job*'s three friends in asserting *Job*'s afflictions to be the fruits and evidences of Gods displeasure, against a person hated by him, when God himself giveth testimony to *Job* so fully at the beginning and end of this book.

4. I do not assert, that God's outward dispensations although in an extraordinary manifestation of his power and goodness, do fully and alwayes speak forth his peculiar love to a person or people, when their testimony is single, and something else be not superadded to render it more authentick: for wicked *Cham* had the same preservation in the ark, from the deluge of waters, as godly *Sem* had; and *Samaritab*'s siege was raised in a way of miracle under wicked *Jeboam*, as well as *Jerusalem*'s was under good *Hezekiah*. Compare 2 *Kings* 7. verse 6. with Chap. 19. vers. 35. It was false Divinity that those *Barbarians* preached, when the Viper fastened on *Paul*'s hand, *No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the Sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live*, Acts 28. vers. 4. which our Saviour fully consulseth in the case of the *Galileans*, and the eighteen persons on whom the tower fell in *Siloe*, *Luke* 13. vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

5. But the glorious and remarkable outgoings of God when falling in with the witness of grace, and the spirit; when they are the returns of the Saints prayers, the fruits of their holy wrastlings, and the issue of their hope, conceived.

ceived in the womb of Gods gracious promises, are comfortable conclusions of divine favour, and do very much seal to the peculiarity of God's love; thus the Saints in their own cases, can distinguish love from hatred by the things which are before them: they know the voice of Christ, and read the love of their father in the freight lines of his providential favours toward them, *Psal. 87.* *vers. 2. God loveth the gates of Zion, how doth this appear? Trap. in loc.* why, *vers. 7.* God saith, *All my springs are in thee:* his All my wisdom, goodness, mercy, power, &c. are not in Zion, thoughts are as water in the cistern, pump'd in and soon run out, upon thee but like water in the fountain; streams of mercy, floods with greatest of favour, and flowings forth of loving kindness; Oh! my bowels it is clear, God loveth Zion, if all his springs be in her; are in thee. especially when drought is upon the earth, and other making parts of *Judab* are like *Gideon's* fleece: *Isa. 38. ver. 17. Thou them to be hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption:* the words of good *Hezekiah* read love in the dispensations of God to God promise him, and putteth that Interpretation upon his missing plenty and raculous restitution to health: Surely he doth much of grace and send against the generation of God's people, and wrong-comfort to geth the mercies of God also, who concludeth, that God them as from loveth us not, because he hath prospered our warfare, overflowing and underwriteth hatred to all those glorious victories, fountain which the Lord of hosts hath given to his people in these though other Nations, and then, when a day of distress was sadly expeditious upon the godly, and the contest was very much be-think them twixt the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpents, to be the Yet I desire, we may all look after other evidences of *Palmitis* divine love amongst us; these are good superstructures word, see where the foundation is well laid, and are *Zion's* security against the gates of hell, provided, everlasting doors be in loc. set open, that the King of glory may come in, and keep court amongst us.

3. This Inference may be drawn from the point, *That the signs of saints are circumstanced with highest aggravations:* the care of God over them, and his love unto them in their distressed estate, against both which they

they offend in sinning, do give a sad tincture to their finnes : Sin is sin in any person, but circumstances do render it much more sinfull : It was high water as to the guilt of sinne, for *Zimri* a Prince of a chief house of the *Simeonites*, to bring a *Midianitish* woman into his tent, and commit whoredome with her, when the Lord had so eminently appeared for Israel in turning *Balaam's* curses into blessings and saving them from the sword of *Midian*, *Numb. 25. vers. 6.* Yea, when the whole congregation was weeping before the Lord for the busines of *Baal-Peor*, where the wrath of God brake forth upon them, so that there fell in one day three and twenty thousand, *1 Cor. 10. vers. 8.*

Trap. in loc.

The Apostle instead of the cloak, bathed in the blood of 23000 upon fornication a bloody cloak, bathed in the blood of 23000 as one observeth : How doth the Lord by his Prophet aggravate *David's* sin, *2 Sam. 12. v. 7, 8, 9.* I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hands of *Saul*, and I gave thee thy Masters house, and thy Masters wives into thy bosome, and gave thee the house of Israel and *Jedab*, &c. What an enumeration of mercies is here ? How doth the Lord expostulate with him ? And what doth the Lord inferre from hence ? why surely, that *David* was acted by a spirit of great disingenuity to sin against such goodness, such bounty, to break such cords of love, which the Lord had cast upon him : Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight ? what, *David* commit Adultery ? what, *David* put the bottle to his neighbour to make him drunk ? thinking to cover sin with sin ? what, *David* slay *Uriah* with the sword of the children of *Ammon* ? what, *David* slay an innocent person in cold blood ? what, *David* murder an husband that he might have his wife ? what, *David* take the Adulterers into his bed and bosome ? what *David* do all this ? Does *David* give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme ? Had another person committed adultery, or further, nay all this, who had been under less obligations unto me, who had onely shared in common providences, and for whom I had done nothing extraordinary,

extraordinary, I should have taken it better at his hands, and should not have reckoned it such an high dishonour: but for *David*? *David* to do this? whom I honoured in the fight of all *Israel*, when he was but a stripling, in the slaughter of great *Goliath* of *Gath*, the *Philistines* Champion? *David*, whom I singled out from amongst his brethren, to pour the anointing oyl upon his head? *David* whom I eminently preferred in my troubles, yea, in seven, when he was hunted as a Partridge upon the mountains? *David*, whom I carried as upon eagles, wings to the throne, through such amazing dangers, that himself cried out, I shall one day perish by the hand of *Saul*? yea, *David*, whom I owned, and gave this glorious testimony of, I have found *David*, a man after mine own heart who shall fulfill all my wills? Oh! for *David*, for this *David* to do all these abominable things which I hate? Oh! what aggravations are wrapped up together, to render the sinne of *David* exceeding unfull? hence himself phraseth it *the iniquity of his sinne*, *Psal.* 32. ver. 5. Observe that, *1 Kings* 11. ver. 9. *The Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel*; And why so angry with *Solomon*? why, the reason is added, which had appeared unto him twice. The Scripture affordeth many paralel places: Oh! the sinnes of Saints are dyed in a deeper crimson, and carry a greater guilt, and this layeth them in oyl, and maketh them lasting, when they are committed under and after discriminating mercies and preservations: Oh that the saints would gather up all the signal providences of God, toward them, and improve them as arguments against sinne! It was *Luther's* advice to answer all temptations, with this, *Christienus sum, I am a Christian*; So let us argue, *after the Lord hath given us such a deliverance as this, should we again break his Commandements*? *Ezra* 9. ver. 13, 14. Oh if any nation under heaven, may be lessoned holiness by atonishing mercies, and a constant succellion of admired preservations, *England* may, our Rulers may, our Ministers may, yea, all the Saints may: for how often hath

hath the Lord defeated army after army, broken confederacy after confederacy, discovered plot after plot; so that wherein soever the enemy hath dealt proudly, God hath been above them; Oh! that the heads of *England* would lay this to heart, and that they and all the Saints would rise up with all their might against their lusts, *to destroy them unto Hornab*, viz. *utter destruction*, Numb. 21. vers. 3. as the Lord hath pursued their enemies even unto *Hornab*: that as they had said among the Nations concerning English Zion, *The Lord hath done great things for her*, Psal. 126. vers. 2. So it may be said by the Nations concerning her, *The Lord blest thee, O inhabitant of justice, and mount of holiness*, Jer. 31. vers. 23. Then would England be changed from glory to glory, from the glory of being a people owned by God, to the glory of being a people like unto God, which last is the greater, yea greatest glory.

4. This inference may be drawn also, *That infidelity and dispendency of spirit in an evil day is very unsuitable to the saints of God*; for them to flage in their faith, and to be crest-fallen in their courage, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storme against the walls, this is unworthy the name and frame of a right Christian: *Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord*, ought to be the charge of a Saint to his own heart, even when he is brought to the very banks of the red Sea: It is that which the Prophets of the Lord receive in Commission: *Isa. 35. ver. 3, 4.* strengthen yea the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, and how mult this be done? why it followeth, *Say unto them that are of a fearfull heart be strong, fear not*; Alas! how should weak hands be strong, and a timorous heart cease to fear? what is the cure of these distempers? why, *Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and save you*: he is on the way already, he will be suddenly with you, and when he cometh, *he will save you*; I but faith a fearfull Saint, What security have I for this? why, thou hast a double security; First, the Promises of

of God; and secondly, the experiences of the saints, *Psal.* 31. verse 19. *Oh! how great is thy goodness, which thou hast layed up for them that fear thee!* The new Covenant is Gods great Store-house, wherein he hath stored up all help and comfort for his people: *Joseph* in the time of great plenty built many Store-houses, wherein he laid up what come could be spared, and therewith gave a full supply to all the Egyptians, when he brought it forth in the yeares of famine: Thus the onely wise God depositeth mercy, and goodness, and power, and comfort in his promises, and when a time of dearth cometh upon his people, then he openeth those Store-houses, and giveth them a full supply: Then Secondly, the other part of this security, is in these words, *which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sonnes of men:* If the saints shall say, we know, there is enough laid up in the Promises, but God keepeth the key, and how shall we come by it at a time of need? why, here the Psalmist sendeth such querelous and distrustfull ones to the experiences which Gods people have had: God hath wrought deliverances, and wrought out the salvation of his beleiving ones in the times of their greatest straights: Yea, the sonnes of men, the seed of *Ismael*, have seen the opening of these Store-houses to the people of God; have seen, how God hath hid them in the secret of his presence from the pride of men, and kept them secretly in his pavillion from the strife of tongues, and therefore be strong, fear not; The strength of the saints lyeth in the arm of the Lord, and faith is the souls leaning upon it, in a wilderness condition, *Cant.* 9. vers. 5. Now as the word of promise is the foundation upon which faith resteth; So, experience is the buttrels that stayeth up faith, which is to faith, as *Aaron* and *Hur* were to *Moses* upon the mount, *Exod.* 17. verse 2. *They kept his hands steady to the going down of the Sun*, How did holy *David* stay up his faith, even to the defiance of the Philistine Champion, who had defied the whole army of *Israel*, at the sight of whom, all the army of *Israel* fled,

flesh, and were sore afraid? 1 Sam. 17. 24. hear at what a rate of holy confidence he speaketh, Verſ. 32. Let no mans heart fail because of him; what a hurry is here in the camp? what distractions are here amongst the valiant ones of Israel? what a strange fear seizeth upon you? do not trouble your selves; I will go and fight with this Philistin: bravely spoken; it argueth a bold, magnanimous spirit: I but faith the King of Israel to him, Verſ. 33. Thou art not able to go against this Philistin, to fight with him, for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth; and therefore it will be impar congruous, a very unequal match, and Israels condition is like to be very sad, seeing their perpetual slavery or liberty dependeth upon the issue of this duel; if thy life be lost, Israels freedom is lost also: A consideration enough to have cow'd a puissant and most expert fouldier, and that, which in probability, made Jonathan and the worthies of Israel decline the combat: yet see how little David standeth upon his tip-toes, and by faith overlooketh this towering Giant, Ver. 34. 35. 36. David said unto Saul, thy servant kept his fathers sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock, and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; I: it may be he was a tame Lyon, that would not turn upon him, yes, he arose against me, and I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him; thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and what doth he infer from hence? that, This uncircumcised Philistin shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God: I; but these are the words of a proud youth, and words are but winde, Thrasonical bravado's, what bottom hath he for his confidence? why, faith is up and experience keepeth it steady: The Lord who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistin: What is this Goliath in the hands of a mighty God, more then the Lyon and the Bear? And why should I doubt the good presence of God, whereof I have had so late and eminent experience? A like passage you have

1 Sam.

1 Sam. 30. vers. 6. *David was greatly distressed*, his own army mutinies against him, and talketh of stoning him; Surely, it must be an high provocation, which maketh an whole army to rise up as one man against their General; and sure, the distress must needs be great, when a multitude of armed men, and enraged too, set themselves against a single person; this was General *David's* case; *The soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sonnes, and for his daughters*; Oh! such losses come near the heart; well might they rise high in their lamentations, and high in their indignation also against *David*, because he had led them out upon a designe, and in their absence the *Amalekites* had smitten *Ziglag* (the city which *Achish* had given to *David* Chap. 27 vers. 6.) and burnt it with fire, and had taken their wives, and their sonnes and their daughters captive, and were gone away with them; But what doth *David* do in this straight? he encouraged himself in the Lord his God; the word is derived from *Chazak*, and importeth, he laid hold on God with all his strength, as men when they are in danger of drowning, will lay such fast hold, that their fingers will sooner be broken then loosened; thus *David* being almost under water, stretched forth his hand of faith, strengthened with promises and experiences, and layeth sure hold on the rock of ages, whereby his head and hopes are kept above water in this dreadful storme: what a noble gallantry of spirit did good *Nebemiah* shew, when *Sbemiab* advised him to take sanctuary in the Temple, because the enemy had designed to fall upon him by night and slay him; a word of advice (which a carnal heart consulting more his own safety, then Gods honour) would readily have listened unto; but what is the answer of this heroic faint? *Neb. 6. vers. 11. Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, being as I am, would go into the temple, to save his life? I will not go in: why, not go in? what safety could he pretend unto? you may suppose him arguing thus, I am under an eminent call from the Lord, to build the city of the sepulchres of my fathers, I have seen the*

face of God in bowing the heart of King *Artaxerxes*, to contribute his royal aid, and commission me to the work; I have found the Elders of the Jews willing to owne my authority, and to rise up as one man to build, strengthening their hands for that good work, Chap. 2. vers. 18. (as it was 2 *Chron.* 30. vers. 12. In *Judah*, *The hand of the Lord was to give them one heart*: Oh that the Lord would give that oneness of heart unto us in the work of our God.) Hence *Nehemiah* gathereth up his spirits, and speaks like a brave man, *Should such a man as I see? a choice spirit, a gallant pattern to be ey'd by all, who are called forth by the Lord, to serve out their generation in doing his work; and if it hath a direct aspect to any age or nation, surely to none more then to ours, both in an eminent call to work, and in eminent preservation of the workmen*: We may experimentally apply that promise as very much fulfilled upon us. *Isa.* 4. vers. 5, 6. *The Lord hath created upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her Assemblies, a cloud and smock by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory there hath been a defence*, [Chuphah.] The word implyeth a covering *Cberube, or nuptial veil*, under which the bride, the Lamb's wife hath been hid from the rage of men: Oh! how should this fortifie the Saints against future dangers, and argue them to a dependent resting upon God! for them to cry out with the prophets servant, *Alas! Master, what shall wee do?* or with the disciples when tempest-toft, *wee perishe*; as though there had been no hope of escaping; as an high dishonour to them as Saints; but more to the Lord Jesus as King of Saints; especially to sink so low in their Faith, as to say, *The Lord hath forsaken me and my Lord hath forgotten me*; this argueth them to be low in the fence of the care, and love of God expressed to them in former mercies; Oh then ye distressed of the Lord take sanctuary in this point, and bewray not your infidelity by a sinking spirit in an evil day!

Is it so that the appearance of God are eminent and immediate in the day of his peoples distress; hath he given in security unto them by experienced preservations that he will be the Lord their Redeemer? Oh this is a choice dish upon the Saintrstable; they need not faint nor famish that have such a morsel to feed upon; yet as wholesome food may send up unwholesome vapors, if unseasonably eaten, or to excess; and good Physick may produce bad effects, if due order be not observed; so this sovereign potion may nourish ill distempers, if not rightly ordered: And therefore I shall entreat you to take this Cordial with these cautions.

1. *Take heed you do not precipitate your selves into needless hazards, and rashly cast your selves into dangers, under the protection of this truth;* It is sinful to argue, and would be unsafe to attempt it, that because *Elijah* forded *Jordan*, and made it passable with his mantle, therefore thou wilt attempt the same, rather then step out of thy way to go over the bridge; or because the three Jewish worthies were preserved in the fiery Furnace, therefore thou wilt throw thy self into the flames; and presumptuously expect the same preservation; no, God will have his people learn the difference between tempting and trusting him: It is folly, not faith for a man to drink down a draught of deadly poison, and say, I believe the promise of Christ, *Mar. 16. vers. 18.* and expect to be antidoted against the venom of it: the Israelites, *Numb. 14. vers. 44.* are a said witnesses to the danger of presumption: read the passage. The Lord liketh not this language, *We will do, and we will go, when he bids not;* that men should bot- tome their safety upon the sandy washes of their own phantasies and fool-hardiness; the same God who bids his people, *Isa. 26. vers. 4. Trust in the Lord for ever;* forbiddeth their tempting of him, *Deut. 6. vers. 16.* which text the Lord Jesus, the best interpreter that ever com- menced upon the Bible, expoundeth to this sence, *Mat. 4. vers. 7.* The Devil had set Christ on a pinnacle of the tem- ple (By the way Note, that height of place giveth opportu- nity

Use 2.

Of Caution.

nity to the tempter; *temple Pinnacles are no safe standings*: when once Satan gets a man into his Rood-loft of spiritual pride, his dangers great and near; no marvel that mens heads should swim, and their hearts swerve (when they stand upon a Pinnacle of the temple) when Satan had got the Lord Jesus so high, he tempteth him to give a proof of his Divinity, by casting himself down, urging the charge of Angels to protect him; but did the Lord Christ take the cue? No, he answered, *It is written thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*; Christ had no call from God, at that time, to cast himself into the hands of *custodient* Angels; here is a full promise, but we must also look to a clear call, *Psal. 91. vers. 11. He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways*, that is in all those courses, which are appointed thee by God, in all lawful and Christian undertakings; for no further doth God or his holy Angels take charge of thee: if thou keepest not within these precincts, thou art out of his protection; wefts and trays fall to the Lord of the Soyl, the State secureth none who travail at undue hours, *Pro. 27. 8. As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place*; God hath made a law to secure a bird upon her nest, *Deut. 22. 6.* but if she stragled away, she lost the protection of that law; so 'tis with a Saint, the promise is his security whilst he keepeth within Gods pale; but if he breaketh his bounds, he tempteth God and forfeiteth his protection: *Solomon gave Shimei his life if he passed not the brook Kidron*, but when he tried the Kings patience and ventured to *Gath*, the condition was broke, and *Shemeiah* was commanded to slay him, *1 King. 2. 36.* Oh, take heed of passing over the brook *Kidron* lest ye dye; steer your course by *Solomons* compass, *Prov. 22. 3.* *A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself*, seech a tempest in the clouds, and seeketh seasonable shelter under the shadow of Gods wings; but the simple passeth on and is punished, pusheth on without fear or wit, and payeth dearly for his folly; the same you have, *Pro. 27. 12.* Who acted at a higher rate of believing then *David*? yet

See M. Lack-
sons Notes
on this text.

yet when Gibeon was infected, *1 Cron. 21. 30.* The text says, *He could not go before the Ark* which was then at Gibeon *for he was afraid, because of the sword of the Angel of the Lord*; he could not with safety to his person adventure himself into that infected place; for 'tis probable that Gibeon had fallen within the circuit of the destroying Angel: Consider Peter in the high Priests hall, and infer, *That rash attempts seldom prosper, presumption rarely goeth unpunished, often unprotected.*

2. *Beware you abuse not this doctrine to a slighting of means, as 'tis unsuitable to the principles of a right faith to tempt God, by precipitating your selves into danger, so it is inconsistent with true piety, to expect miracles when means are present; Means and miracles are both the products of Gods mercy to his people, and have both their place assigned: miracles come in when means are wanting, or insufficient, as in dividing the red Sea, feeding many thousands with Manna and Quails in a wilderness, &c. And then is the time and place for means, when there is no need of miracles, as receiving nourishment by food, warmth by cloaths, health in the use of Physick, &c. Though God be able to do abundantly above all, that we ask or think, Eph. 3. 20. yet God will not do it, at least always, when vain man would have him, The holy one of Israel must not be limited, neither as to time, nor manner, nor measure of acting, because the Lord Jesus bids his disciples, *Mat. 6. 26. Consider the fowls they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into their Barns, and yet they are fed by God.* Shall men therefore throw their ploughs into the ditch, and expect harvest in an extraordinary way, or to be fed by miracle without them? sure, he that gave his word of covenant, *That seed time and harvest should not cease, Gen. 8. 22. And he that instructeth the husbandmen in ploughing and sowing, Isa. 28. 24, 25, 26.* will not countermand him, or in a way of miracle supply him, if he cease his labor, or refuse to act up unto his teaching; how hardly will a tender mother be persuaded to expose her helpless infant, newly divided from her bowels, because God feedeth the young Ravens*

Ravens which cry unto him, when forsaken by the old ones? *Job* 38. 41. Though a Raven brought *Elijah* bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening to the brook *Gherith*, by the special appointment of God in a time of famine, *1 King*. 17. 3, 4, 5. Yet this is not a pattern for him to follow, who hath money in his hand, and Markets open; I doubt he must take up with short commons, and make many hungry meals, that expecteth a Raven to be his Cook and Caterer, *David* would not cast of the means of safety offered unto him by a timely escape, when God had refolved him those two great questions, *That Saul would come down, and that the men of Keilah would deliver him and his men into the hand of Saul*, *1 Sam.* 23. 11, 12. neither did *Saint Paul* refuse to be let down in a Basket through a window by the wall, when the governor of *Damascus* sought to apprehend him, and the gates were shut up against him, *2 Cor.* 11. 32, 33. He did not argue the example of *Elijah*, who brought down fire from heaven, to consume the Captains and their fifties, *2 King*. 18. 9, 10, 11. nor that of *Elisba*, who prayed the Ammites blind, that were sent to surpise him: *2 King*. 6. 18. but improved that name of safety, which by a good providence was afforded to him; *Thus did Brentius, so soon as he had received this advertisement from a Senator of Hala, Fuge, fuge Brenti, cito, citius citissime, Flee speedily, away for thy life, stay not: they that intercept, ye shall all be taught of God to a slighting of teaching ordinances, which are the instituted means of grace and knowledge, and expand, The just shall live by Faith, to a neglect of serving providence in the use of ordinary ways of help and comfort, do both mistake the minde of God, and the meaning of those texts.*

Take heed. Cover-trusting means; of laying too great a burden upon a creature bottome, Isa. 2. 1-3. *The Egyptians are men, not God, and their horses flesh and not spirit; This Antiochus speaketh fully to the creatures feebleness; there is nothing of Omnipotency in the creature; A man may be brought to that freight, wherein creature-helpers do stoop in vain, and wherein all created power may speak* to

to the expectancy of man, as the King of Israel to the women, *If the Lord do not help, his should I help?* and the reason is clear in the text, *they are not God, not spirit*, that is, their power is limited, beyond which they cannot work, *When the Lord shall stretch forth his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fall together*: As if a man should underprop a ruinous house, and the props being too weak to bear the burden, do break, and so the house and they fall down together: How free is the Church in the acknowledgment of this truth, when she had bought it by dear experience? *Jer. 3. 23. Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of the mountains; there is a great deal of significance in the two first words: (Achem) Truly of a truth*, as if they had said, There is truth and faithfulness in the word of Gods promise, we may venture safely upon this bottom; he cannot deny himself, for he is a faithful God, nor doth he promise beyond the reach of his power, for he is an Almighty God, and therefore the Church affirmeth, *Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel*: Israel never failed of salvation, when they waited for it from the Lord their God who is a God of truth: But on the other side, if Israel the best of people, do lay their expectancy of help from the hills, the creatures in its highest advancements and advantages, yea from the multitude of mountains, which (*Hatim*) Metaphorically relate to the greatest persons and to thing of greatest height and excellency, upon worldly accounts, *Mich. 6. 2.* Yea combined and associated, they shall certainly fail in their hopes, and meet with disappointments, because (*Sheker*) it is in vain, they lye or deal deceitfully; there's falsehood in their promise, and feebleness in their power, which is confidently asserted by that holy man, *Psal. 62. 9.* Surely men of low degree are vanity, (*Ben-Adam*) sons of *Adam*; this being a common name to all mankind, is used here for men low in the world, in respect of estate or power, which are as the valleys or hills of earth; these are vanity, little can be expected by

way of help from them, because of their emptiness; who can expect water out of an empty vessel? or safety from a mole-hill when a Cannon bullet flyeth at him? But what shall we say to the great ones of the world? Why, men of high degree are a lye, (*Beni-Isai*) The sons of *Isa*, men of highest advancements in the world are but a lye, they will speak you fair (no doubt *David* had many complements from *Sauls* Courtiers) lift you up into great expectations by their plausible promises and pretensions, but in a day of distress, their words vanish into smoke, and they appear to a needy petitioner, as a dry lake to the thirsty traveller: Oh! how sadly can thousands (now alive) with sad hearts bear witness to this truth! And Oh that it were not a spot in Gods people! What volumes may be writ upon this subject with the tears, yea the blood of the oppressed? The Lord humble us for this sin, and so manage the spirit of our Rulers, *That they may loose the bands of wickedness, undo the heavy burdens, let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke, then shall their light break forth as the morning, and their health shall spring forth speedily, their righteousness shall go before them, and the glory of the Lord shall be their Rereward*, *Isa.* 58. 6, 8. Then shall the poor and oppressed say; the Lord blefs thee, *O habitation of Justice, O England where Justice dwelleth: See that, Isa.* 9. 10. *The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones, the Sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into Cedars: They run from creature to creature, and change creature for creature, the weak for the strongest, yea, do, what Art and Nature, improved to the best advantage, can do for safety; but with what success? truly very little: For vers.* 12. *The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind shall devour Israel with open mouth; So true is that Hof.* 5. 13. applied to an expectancy of help from any creature, disjunctively from God, *When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to King Sargon, or to the King that should plead their cause, or their defender: But how speed they? Yet could he not heal you nor cure your wounds; it is* the

the way of carnal delights to shift out to the creature for help in times of straits, and a sad evidence of a carnal heart so to do. But it is a truth handed down from father to son, that creature-recumbency avileth not; no healing, no curing; nay 'tis not only not encouraged with a blessing but thundered against with a curse, *Jer. 17. 5, 6. Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his Arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord; wherein doth this curse shew it self?* It followeth, *For he shall be like the Heath in the desert*: Heath-ground is usually barren, but Heath-ground in a desert, upon which nothing of cost or culture is spent, addeth to the barrenness of it: nay further, *And shall not see when good cometh*: the showers of mercy fall upon this place, and the dews of good-will from the Lord distil upon this person, in such or such comforts or enlargements; I, but creature-relyers, shall not taste the least of all; the noble mans punishment, *2 King. 7. 2. shall be their portion, They shall see it with their eyes, but they shall not taste thereof; no, they shall inhabit the parched places of the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.* Oh apply this; and let the consideration of this, caution you from a creature-dependency; use the means but do not trust in them; there is nothing provoketh more to wrath, nor rendereth the choicest means unserviceable more then this. Oh! let us be humbled for this fault; for sure, it hath been much our fault and our folly (which doubtless hath caused the Lord in displeasure to us, to dash many excellent instruments in pieces like earthen pitchers) and in all our creature-improvements, let us wisely sail betwixt these two extremes, in tempting of God, and an overtrusting to means, both which are very dangerous.

4. Lastly, *Take heed of abusing providential appearances and preservations to wantonness*; by a neglect of those duties you owe to God for them; besides the general, there is a particular command, and call to duty, to holiness, to repentance, to faith, to thankfulness, &c. in every mercy; as in affections, so in preservations, the *Lords joyce cryeth, and the men of wisdom see his name*; they see and own God in this and that dispensation; and hear the

rod, yea and hear the staffe too, and take notice both who, and wherefore he hath appointed it; **what** the intendment's of God are in such or such a providence, otherwise *the fruit, yea and comforts of both are lost* : We must not behave our selves like children, who when they perceive the hearts of their parents run out in a great deal of tenderness towards them, take liberty from thence to play the wantons; or *Abolom* like to act rebellion against them; such a frame is very unsuitable to such dispensations, and no wayes answering the intendment's of the Father of mercies: how ill the Lord resents this carriage is evident in many Scriptures. See that *Deut. 32. vers. 10. He found him, i.e. Israel in the wilderness, he kept him as the apple of his eye: 1, but vers. 15. Jesurum waxed fat, and kicked, as a wanton colt that is high fed and lusty turneth his heels upon his own damn; so played Israel with the Lord his Maker; God calleth him Jesurum from Jesur* reſtitute or uprightness, as expecting this from every true Israelite, especially under such engaging providences; but in what a croſs way doth *Israel* walk? how doth he turn the heels upon God, both by murmuring, Idolatry, and manifold disobediences? what then? doth God take it well? no *vers. 19. When the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons and daughters; Oh! to beſons and daughters, near and dearto the most high God under eminent discoveries of divine favour, and yet kick! this provokes unto great wrath: read and enlarge this Scripture in your own thoughts: God cannot indure to be slighted in his mercies, and to be evil-intreated for his good will: Oh! such returns are grapes of gall and bitter cluſters, they are laid up in store with him, and sealed up amongst his treasures; God bears them in minde, they stick with him. So *Jer. 2. vers. 6. They said not, Where is the Lord, that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts, and of pits, through a land of drought and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, an where no man dwelt? They did not own God in these various**

various and choice providences; when their own turns were served, and they were quietly possessed of a land flowing with milk and honey, they did not at all ask after God, nor make mention of him, he was grown a meer stranger in *Israel*, all these acts of kindness had no work upon their hearts to fix them in the good ways of God, but they went far from God, they ran after this and that Idol, and changed their glory into that which did not profit.

Oh *England*, see thine own face in this glass! How do we run from error to error! how do we set up our opinions as so many Idols to worship: yea how have we turned our glory, truth and holiness, and the good old Puritan zeal and sincerity, which was our glory, into disputes and wranglings, anger and animosities which do not profit. But to go on, how doth the Lord take this? why vers. 9. he tells them he will plead with them, commence a suit, and lay his action in his high Court of Justice against them, yea with their childrens children will he plead; Oh it is very sad! let us apply it, the children yet unborn may rue their fathers wantonness of spirit, it may make our reservations but reservations: believe it friends, God will not take this at our hands, no more than at *Israel*; he is not so prodigal of his mercies, as to spend them always on such unworthy persons: Minde that; *Jos. 24.* vers. 20. *If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then will he turn and do you hurt, after he hath done you good; he will turn the very mounthes of his Cannons against you.*

Oh that *England* would lay this to heart, and all the faithful of the land had that text as a constant Remembrancer before their eyes, both upon a personal and national account, *Jude* vers. 5. *I will therefore put you in remembrance, though you once knew this, how that the Lord having saved the people out of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not:* The reason why the Apostle layeth down the example of Gods Justice upon the Israelites, after he had fetched them out of Egypt by a deliverance so full of wonders, you finde mentioned, vers. 4. *because*

Gods ancient judgments were ordained to be our warnings and examples for practises make us Partakers of sadly may we fear, that as *England* hath paralleled *Israel* their guilt, in murmuring, unthankfulness, impenitency, lustings, and there-fore involve us in their punishment See Mr. *Manton*, in *Jude* p. 241. 242.

Some were under profession, had turned the Grace of God into wantonness, translating it from its proper end, by arguing from mercy to liberty, which is the Devils Logick; when as the right method is to argue from mercy to duty: Oh let this be a seasonable word to all the Lords people! what greater deliverance than that of *Israel* out of Egypt? yet being abused by them, their carcases fell in the wilderness, *Josue* and *Caleb* only excepted; and what greater deliverances have many ages brought forth then these of ours, yet how have we abused them? & how Partakers of sadly may we fear, that as *England* hath paralleled *Israel* in murmuring, unthankfulness, impenitency, lustings, and wantonness of spirit, which are strange abuses of such glorious mercies, so it may fare with us, the men of this generation, as it did with *Israel*, some few *Josue's* and *Caleb's* only excepted, who follow the Lord fully: I know this is much, and sadly upon the spirits of some gracious ones, who being mourners for these things, are the marked ones of the Lord.

I shall shut up this Use with two Scriptures, the one of a national, and the other of a personal reference, *Ex.* 9. vers. 13. 14. it is that holy mans acknowledgement before the Lord in prayer, *After thou, O God, hast given us such a deliverance as this, should we again break thy Commandments, and joy in affinity with the people of these abominations? Mark that, and apply it to the times that are lately past; wouldst thou not be angry with us, until thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant, nor escaping? In all the judgements wherewith God threatens his own people, he ever promiseth a remnant shall be reserved; but here, such a sense of the greatness and provoking nature of sin, was upon this good mans spirit, continued and continued in, and after such a signal deliverance, that God would go beyond all presidences and comminations, even in the utter extirpation of them; so that there should be no escaping. No not for a remnant: A sad storm after so serene a calm; a dreadful doom-day after so clear a morning. The Lord awaken the Nation,*

tion, and give us wisdom to improve our deliverances, lest we also fall after the same example of unbelievers, Heb. 4. vers. 11.

The other Scripture is that, *Psal. 30. vers. 6, 7. In my prosperity, I said, I shall never be moved, Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong. David thought himself cock-sure, as we say, of Gods favour, and safe from the fear of any change, because the Lord by his favour had made his mountain to stand strong: He was not long since a little hillock, of a mean family in Israel, and now he was grown up to be a mountain, both in honour and power, to be above all men in his present standing, as the hills are above the vallies; he was brought to this high and raised pitch by the favour of God, nay had an establishment in that state and estate, not by man, but by God himself, who bangeib the earth upon nothing, supporting that weighty body without any Basis, but his own will, and word of power; and all this, not according to the course of his ordinary providence, but in a way of special favour, and that by the concurrence of many and glorious providences: Yet for all this, because he abused these mercies, and came not up in his deportments to the Lords expectation, God hid his face, withdrew his covering Cherub, and providential supplies, and then his mountain, his standing-strong mountain met with an earthquake; though the house of Saul was gone, yet his own house was a seed-plat of troubles unto him: Amnon desiling Thamar, Absalom slaying Amnon, usurping the Crown, and driving David from Jerusalem, &c. The Lord set this home in much mercy.*

Use 3. I shall come now to an Use of Exhortation; Are the appearances of God eminent and glorious to his people in the day of their distress? Hast thou experienced them to be so in thine own case? canst thou witness this truth, Except the Lord had been thy help, thy soul had well nigh dwelt in silence, thou wert within a hairs breadth of death: Oh consider what thy straights have been; hast thou been in perils of waters, or in perils of robbers, or in perils of the City,

City, or in perils in the wilderness, or in perils amongst
 false brethren, in perils of war, at home by thy own
 Country-men, and abroad by strangers; and hath the
 Lord been seen upon the Mount? hath he come in with
 seasonable supplies, and brought thee off from the bor-
 ders of the grave? Oh! what have thy returns to God
 been? what improvement hast thou made to his glory,
 and thy own spiritual growth? how hath thine heart
 gone after the God of thy salvation? If thou *hast taken*
up the cup of blessing, and praised the name of the Lord; if
thou hast paid the vows, which thou madest in the day of thy
distress: If the sense of mercy hath had a kindly work
 upon thy spirit, and brought forth the blessed fruits of
 sanctity, newness of life, new obedience, and a total re-
 signation of thy self unto God; if thou livest in a lively
 sense of these things, resolving in **the strength** of grace
 received, to spend that life which thou receivedst from the
 dead, not to the *lusts of men, but to the will of God*; and
 from a sense of thy temporal, *doest work out thine own eter-*
nal salvation with fear and trembling, my work is done,
 my end attained, I have nothing to urge by way of ex-
 hortation upon thee, only desire to blest the Lord with,
 and for thee, endeavouring to draw up after thee, ex-
 hibiting thy pattern as exemplary to my practice: I pro-
 fess my self to be much at the foot of the hill, and far
 below such high attainments, although my obligations
 to the most High God are very many, and my experience
 of preserving mercy **hath** been very signal, the sense
 whereof hath led **me out to this Discourse**, and made
 these meditations publick: Hence then by a frequent con-
 verse with mine own heart, and often feeling the pulse of
 mine own spirit, I have grounds to beleeve that a word
 of advice may be seasonable upon this subject, to others,
 and to my self, seeing too little of this nature doth come
 either from Prefs or Pulpit; there being very few, who
 say, *Where is the Lord that brought us out of Egypt? that led*
us through the wilderness, through a land of drougbt, and of the
shadow of death? And therefore in the strength of the Lord,

con-

conduct of his teaching Spirit, I shall improve this Doctrine by way of advice.

1. *To some peculiar Christians in a distinct capacity from other men, I mean to some ranks and orders of men.*
2. *To Christians in general, without such particular references, only as they meet in Christ the common head, and in the Church, the common body.*

In my first address, I shall only single forth five ranks of men to speak unto.

1. *The Magistrates.*
2. *The Ministers.*
3. *Military-men.*
4. *Mariners and Merchants, whoetraffick and employments lye at Sea.*
5. *The restored ones of the land, whom the Lord hath redeemed from the grave in these late dayes of Visitation.*

1. I humbly crave leave to be-speak the Magistrates with a word of Exhortation : Ye that be the Rulers of the people, and Judges of Israel, let me beseech you seriously and often to consider the worth and weightiness of your office, that though this, or that title, this or that form of administration be *à lais d'opinion*, an humane creature, an ordinance of man, 1 Pet. 2. vers. 13. yet Government and Magistracy it self is an Ordinance and Institution of God himself, Rom. 13. vers. 1, 2. *That the cause which cometh before you is the cause of God, Deut. 1. vers. 17.*

That ye judge not for man, but for God, who is with you in judgement, 2 Chron. 19. vers. 6. that the dignity of place Be-cause unto which ye are advanced, is exceeding high, ye being the Vicegerents of the most High God, in all Civil administrations, and upon whom the Name of God himself is called, Ps. 82. v. 1, 6. *I have said ye are Gods, and all that are children of the most High* (not by adoption of grace, but by administration of office) That the expectation of the Lords people is great from you: That (now the Lord hath turned his hand so much and often upon you, as the Potter turns and fashions his vessel upon the wheel) *your dresses should be purely purged away, and all your*

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tin-wisped, and that their Judges should be as at the first; and their Counsellors as at the beginning, such as David, Hezekiah, and Josiah were amongst the Kings, and such as Josuah, Zerubbabel and Nehemiah were amongst the Judges and Governours of Israel, that so their Jerusalem may be called the City of righteousness, and their Nation, an habitation of Justice, That Zion may be redeemed with judgement, and her converts with righteousness, Isa. 1. vers. 25-26, 27. and let it not be ill sented, that I intreat you to consider, how small your springs were, which are now spread into broad Rivers, how Jacob-like the passage of some have been over this Jordan, Gen. 32. vers. 10. How much of truth there is in Hannab's Song, 1 Sam. 2. vers. 7, 8. And in Davids Psalm, Psal. 113. vers. 7, 8. one echoing to another, like the Seraphims in Isaiab; The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich, he bringeth low, and lifteth up, he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up egentem, the needy from the dunghil, to set them among Princes, to make them inherit the throne of glory: As David, Agathocles, Numa, Maximilianus, &c. and that ye would always keep a fresh sence of these three Considerations upon your spirits, you that have owned the cause of God, and acted in the work of this generation.

1. Consideration. *Consider how eminent and glorious the appearances of God have been unto you, how the arm of God hath been mightily out-stretched for you, when you met with opposition to blood and wasting in the Land, and that from a numerous and enraged enemy: How often the Lord defeated the plots, befooled the Councils, and broke the power and Armies of them, who lifted up themselves against you, and Amalek-like fought you in Rephidim, when you were upon your march through the Wilderness, to the land of promise, and who were as Samaritans among you, hindering you by force of Armes, and weakening your hands by false reports, when you were building, at least repairing the house of the Lord, and the walls of our Jerusalem, and yet in the things wherein they dealt proudly, God was above them, and the same God hath*

hath by unparallel providence, kept the sword still in your hands, and you still upon the seat of Justice.

Consid. 2. Consider how the Lord hath not join'd you in Copartnership with those that were your enemies, dividing the government betwixt you, and them (which surely not long since would have been owned as a great privilege by you, and as a great mercy by us) but the Lord hath put the sole Government of the Nation, and the ordering of affairs into your hands : You have seen *Maries Magnificat* made good, *The Lord hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree*, Luke 1. vers. 52. Are not some of you those of low degree, whom the Lord hath exalted to the seat of the mighty? Are not you (I hope some of you are) *Eliakims*, the servants of the Lord whom he hath chosen in *Shebna's* room? Hath he not clothed you with their Robes, strengthened you with their Girdles, committed their Government into your hands, and made you fathers to the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, and to the house of *Judah*? Isa. 22. vers. 20, 21. Oh that this might be layed to heart, and the goodness of the Lord unto you in it! that the abuses of the former Government may be remedied, not revived; that the pride and pomp (which was onely like that of King *Agrippa* and *Bernice*, *πῶλον περὶ λεία*, a meer phantastie, *Act.* 25. vers. 23. a vain shew, all worldly pomp and state being no better) of former Governours may be lamented, not looked after by you, may be mourned for, not meddled with by you, the righteousness of Christ being your Robe, his cross being your Crown, his Gospel being your glory, and that with *Nehemiab* that good *Tirshatha*, you may not onely procure the peace, but prevent the oppression of your people, that your toynes may be lighter than the little fingers of your Predecessors and that you may speak in your deportments the words of *Nehemiab*, chap. 5. vers. 14, 15. *From the time that I was appointed to be Governour in the land of Judah, even twelve years, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the Governour, but the former Governours which were before me, were*

chargeable unto the people : Yea even their servants bare rule over the people, but so did not I, because of the fear of God, yea also, I continued in the work of this wall, neither bought we any land.

Consider, how not Magistrates only, but Magistrates also hath been stricken at, by men whose spirits and principles were against both : Some of whom, it may be, have sat in Council with you, and have formerly ventured far, to lay the Key of Government upon you, and upon themselves, but since (so strangely are they metamorphosed) they have hated, it may be your persons, and opposed your Government, so that you may take up Davids complaint, Psal. 41. vers. 9. *Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread hath lift up his heel against me*; compared with Psal. 55. vers. 11, 12, 13. *Mine equal, my guide, my acquaintance, we took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company.*

Oh ! let these and many other considerations of like import dwell upon your spirits, and often meditate, that though attempts have been made against your persons and places, yet the Lord hath secured you in your present standing. Oh then ! Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit your selves like men, be strong, 1 Cor. 16. vers. 13. Oh remember what opportunities ye once had, that had ye acted up unto them, and vigorously improved the advantages ye once had, much of that evil, which in later years hath sprung up, might have been buried under ground, and the smell of the Nation would have been as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed, Gen. 27. vers. 27. Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning these things ; may we not hopefully conclude, that the Lord hath thoughts of peace, and not of trouble towards us? Doth not concurrence of the many providences hint good will from the Lord unto us ? Is it nothing, that no weapon which is formed against us doth prosper : that no designe takes place ? no Mine takes fire ? no plot, how secret soever ripeneth without discovery ? witness the late project of blood and murder against the Protectors person,

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person, like the old Powder-plot, detected in the very nick of time, when the fire-work was prepared and placed, and the match lighted; that all attempts to involve the Nation into war and trouble, have been dashed in pieces? that still the Nation enjoys peace, and the Gospel in peace? Stir up all your strength for God, rise up in all your might for the interest of Zion, and for the honour of the Lord of Hosts, who hath carried you through all those great changes, which you eyes have beheld, and hath still kept the helme of Government in your hands, notwithstanding all those storms which have been upon the Nation, and hath now put a new opportunity into your hands, the Lord make you magnanimous and unanimous in the work of the Lord, that yet a blessed Reformation may be brought forth by your means, that to the people of this land may be known among the Nations, and their off-spring among the people, so that all they that seem may acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed, *Isa. 61. vers. 9.* Suffer therefore an unworthy Son of Zion, and Minister of the Gospel, for the good (of a part) of that people, over which the Lord hath set you to be a Remembrancer from the Lord unto you, that mercies received may be improved by you, and enkindle an holy zeal for God in you.

1. *To make good the Covenants and Oaths of your God which are upon you, and into which, by your authority and example (at least many of you) we entered, that the sense of Covenant-mercies, may provoke unto Covenant-duties, for the advancement of the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus in unity, peace, purity, and the power of godliness, that Sabbath-singleness may be asserted by you, Gospel-Ordinances may be vindicated, a Professing-people may be countenanced, a faithful Ministry may be still encouraged and protected, such bounds may be set to that act for liberty, that Heretodox opinions may not like a land-flood overflow the Nation, but that horrid Impostors, and notorious offenders may be punished, that all Israel may* *hear*

bear and fear, Deut. 13. vers. 11. And that the anointing of God may give you safe rules of tenderness, that guilt may not lye upon you from God, nor just blame from good men, for that loseness of spirit you shew towards the Lords people, who in these times of light and liberty, do conscientiously, act under different persuasions in indifferent things, and therefore do much stand in need of Christian and prudent Moderators, who may keep our fingers out of one anothers consciences, may protect us from the violence of imposing spirits and principles, and that uniformity may not be pressed with a Prelatical, but with an Evangelical spirit in disciplinary points; when the winde bloweth high and crofs, if the Pilot doth not wisely govern the helme, the ship is in danger to be split, at least much of the precious lading to be lost.

2. *That a sense of eminent preservations, may stir you up to a careful suppression of sin and wickedness, by a vigorous pursuit of such penal Laws as are now in force, and by enacting more severe, or adding to the former wherein they are defective, that the Nation may not abound with oaths, pride, drunkenness, thefts, uncleannesse, oppression, by depopulating, inclosures, and other abominations, as it hath done, and still doth, nor mourn under a sad fear of that great controversy, which the Lord may justly take up against it for them, Ho. 4. vers. 1, 2, 3.* That in order to this, active and conscientious Magistrates may be placed in every County, godly and stirring officers may be chosen and encouraged in every Town, which affordeth persons meet for such a trust, that the number of Ale-houses, which have been the seminaries and seed-plots of vice and villanies, may still be suppressed, as they have lately been in great measure by the care of some worthy persons among us, and that in order to both the Tables, you may be a terror to evil works, not bearing the sword in vain, Rom. 13. vers. 3, 4. having this inscription engraven upon all your Judiciary proceedings, as was upon the sword of Charles the Great, *Decem preceptorum cussos*

custos Carolus, Charles is keeper of the ten Commandments, and that upon account of your lenity and remissness to offenders, that may not justly be laid unto you by the Saints, as was by the poor Smith to the Lantgrave of Thuring, *Durssee, Durssee, O infelix Lantgrave!*

3. Improve your share in *National mercies and personal, yea Magistratical preservations*, to the comfort and countenance of the good people of the Land, though poor and inconsiderable upon any worldly account: There all along have prayed for you, and ventured all under you; that you may speak those words, *Zech. 12. vers. 5. The Governors of Judah shall say in their heart, the Inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the Lord of Hosts their God.* Surely the people of the Land, who have a Covenant-interest in the Lord of Hosts, have been much your strength under God, both upon the Mount by praying, and in the valley by fighting, when your straights have been the greatest: Oh then! what *Kabshekab* spake in a bad sense, give me leave to speak with some change of words, in a good sense, *Isa. 36. vers. 9. How then will ye turn away the face of one Captain of the least of my Masters servants?* So, just how then will ye turn away your faces from the complaints of the least of my Masters servants? the Saints and subjects of the King of Zion? or how then will you dis-engage the least of them, that they should turn away their faces from praying for you, much less turn their prayers against you? Oh remember, they have been your strength in the day of battel, and not pleading of such in their addressments unto you, and not pleading their cause in case of wrong and oppression, when their Adversaries have been too mighty for them, and a relief could only be had from a Court of Equity, and in a course of equity, hath been much complained of upon earth, and will hear very ill in heaven in the ears of the Lord of Hosts their God: Oh then! be *Eliakims* to the poor of the flock, and make good that Prophecie, *That upon you may be hanged all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels*

vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flaggons, Isa. 22. 24. Great vessels can stand upon their own bottoms : And surely the fresh records of those glorious things, which the Lord hath brought forth by you and for you, will engage you to the things propounded, yea, to greater then these, if set home by the Lord upon your hearts, and that, as returns for received mercies.

I shall apply this doctrine to my brethren of the Ministry, suffer I beseech you a word of exhortation from one, who is low in name and gifts in Israel, yet your brother and fellow labourer in the Lords vineyard, for the bringing in and building up of souls, that I may give up my accounts with joy, and through rich grace and freemery in Jesus Christ, may receive a crown of glory, which fadeth not away, when the great Shepherd shall appear, 1 Pet. 5. 4. whole glorious appearance we look for and long after, and which (according to Chronological computation and the opinion of some) draweth near, and indeed to believers ought to be ever at hand in the meditation and expectancy of it, and mostly to the Ministers, that we may be quickened up to duty and diligence, That when our Lord cometh he may finde us doing his own works : The elders therefore I exhort who also am an elder, as th: Apostle saith, 1 Pet. 5. 1. (though unworthy of that honor and office) that you would improve the appearances of God, which have been eminent and immediate in the day of his peoples distress. Ah brethren ! hath a day of distress been upon us ? and hath the Lord stood by and strengthened us in all attempts which have been made against us ? Have we been stars and still are we, in the hands Jesus Christ? hath the Lord made us a fenced brazen wall unto the people of this nation, when we have taken forth the precious from the vile, in obedience to Gods command and Gospel-Order ? have they fought against us and not prevailed? and whence was it that attempts against us succeeded not ? Why ? Because the Lord hath been with us to save us and deliver us, Jer. 15. 19, 20. Oh brethren ! what have our returns been ? what fence have we of these mercies upon

upon our spirits? what apprehensions of our present standing?

1. *Oh, Let us consider, How deep a share we have had in all the National mercies and preservations*, if the ship had been wrack we should hardly have escaped to land on broken boards; if the enemy had prevailed; that party had been conquered, that interest dast in pieces which we owned and adhered unto, what quarter, think ye, should we have had? however men of other capacities might have sped, it would have been ill enough with us, we should not only have suffered in a common capacity, as those who abetted the Parliamentary interest against the Royal Cause and Party, but as Incendiaries, as men (in the fence of our adversaries) who had blown the trumpet of rebellion, and preach't up a spirit of Sedition amongst our people; nay, men of our own coat, and many of our own charge, would have helped forward our calamity: But now through the appearances of a good God, those storms of blood and war are scattered; peace is restored, and we enjoy as large a share as any, in the safety and tranquillity of the Nation.

2. *Consider what restraints were upon us, as to the exercise of our gifts and callings*; few, though persons eminent in grace and learnings, that would not pronounce the *Sabbath* of the times, had any opportunity to preach, with any encouraging maintenance in preaching, and those that had, how were they confined as to doctrines and matter of preaching; bound up as to days, and limited as to times, to wit, a Sermon hour, which they must not under penalty exceed: But now that Monopoly is taken off, those boundaries broken down, and a great door and effectual is open to us; we have Pulpets of our own, and the liberty not only of our own but of others also, we have the freedom of Sabbaths, and also may without the check of authority do the work of a Sabbath on every week day; every day may be a Lords day, *a day of the son of man to us*; who amongst us have received a check from the Rulers for preaching too often and too much, if

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the matter delivered was not offensive upon a Civil account ? which doubtless would have been owned as a singular mercy, by those worthies of the Lord, who have gone before us.

3. Consider, *what yokes have been put upon our necks, what impositions upon our consciences, what innovations and offensive ceremonies have been obtruded up n us* : How many godly Ministers have been courted, silenced, suspended, ejected, exiled ? not because their principles were vitious ; their lives scandalous or their doctrines erroneous : not because they could not preach, as being ignorant, or because they would not preach, as being negligent ; but because they would not kiss the Calves, and submit to that which was then called Uniformity, and that in every puntilio and ceremony : How many choice Divines have had great reasonings within their own spirits, and much arguing one with another, whether they should yield to all imposed ceremonies, to gain an opportunity to honour God in the course of their Ministry, or else quit their places and people, yea the nation also rather then dishonour God, and burden their own consciences with them ? How many did choofe rather to be put out of their livings, Mr. *Whiting* then to put on their Surplis ? and how did some choofe Mr. *Whiting* rather a voluntary exile, even into *America*, rather then late Minister conform to innovated superstitions ? but now the Church of *Edon* in is swept, and all that trash is carried out of the doors ; *Northampton* and nothing now *in sacris*, imposed, which is not agreeable to Scripture truth and pattern ; So that, if our spirits be wounded, they are from the fence of our own sins, or from differences among our equals, not from the smart of imposed Ceremonies from Superiors.

4. Consider, *what opposition we met withal, in the years that are past, by men of carnal spirits and principles, even in our own places, when we have reproved their wickedness and contended against their adored vanities* : How have many godly Ministers been slighted by the prophane Rabble, rebuking their Sabbath-breaking, when they could plead *the book of liberty and the Royal Sanction* ? Nay, how many have

have been secretly traduced and openly reproached by men of our own profession ? how have they poisoned the mindes of our hearers, and have laboured to pull down what we have built up, or build their own hay and stubble, as superstructures, on that foundation which we have laid ? How have they branded us with names of infamy, that so they might lessen the affections of our people from our persons, and their regards from our Ministry ? How had have the complaints of some been for want of a good neighbor-hood ? Good Ministers were thin in most places, for one faithful, honest, painful, and conscientious Minister; ten yea twenty bad enough might be found in every County : But now, though some of our people are the same in spirits and principles, yet are they far more tame and quiet under reproof; though they run away, like wild horses with the Bit in their mouths, yet they do not cast their Riders ; and where the stream is stoppt in its wonted course ; yet it silently recurs without swelling over or breaking down the banks ; *Bryars and thorns may now be touched without an iron Gauntlet, and we dwell safely, though among Scorpions, Ezek. 2.6.* Wickedness hath no establishment now by a law, but meets with the check and frowns of Authority in all the kinds of it ; And now for one bad one, we have five, yea ten good neighbors ; yea many Counties being now planted, yea filled with godly Ministers ; so that was it not for our private differences, and those unhappy Animosities which they kindle amongst us, what sweet communion might we maintain ? How might we improve our Lecture-meetings to peace and union ? And how free might we be in asking and advising one another ? *The Lord heal those Paroxysms of pride and passion, which cause Paul and Barnabas to break company, even for a John Mark, Acts 15.39.*

5. Consider, what small allowance some of us have had when we served as stipendiaries, under Prelatical Ministers ; out of two, or three hundred pound, *per annum*, scarce twenty would be allowed us by some, as wages for all the work ; *hand ignota referto ;* The Hebrews have a Proverb, *Bos det*

*bet edere ex tritura sua, the Ox should eat of the corn he treadeth out, But now adays, by slight or might, they so muzzle the labouring Ox, that they make an Als of him, says one: in many places they allow him nothing but straw, for treading out the corn, and so much straw as themselves please, saith another; did not men deal with those faithful Ministers, as those Greians did with their servants, that put an Engine about their necks (called *παρωμα*) which reached down to their hands, that they might not so much as lick of the meal when they were sifting it? It was long since complained of, That many dealt with their Ministers, as carriers do by their Horses, they lay heavy burthens upon them, and then hang bells about their necks: So they require hard work, and onely give them good words: But now the Lord hath prepared a table before us in the midst of our enemies, and caused our cup to overflow, *Psal.* 23. 5. The whole land is before us and the Lord hath made us to dwell in the best of the land many of us, *Gen.* 47. 6. which is envied by many, and is much the ball of contention; But though I own the goodness of the Lord in that plentiful provision which his bounty hath now made for us, and conclude the Apostles assertion to be Gospel and Authentick, *1 Cor.* 9. 7. *Who geth a warfare onely at his own charge? doth the souldier fight without his pay? or who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof?* Do not many bunches of Grapes and flocks of Wine go to the Masters table? And who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk thereof? Hath not the Shepherd his wages either in milk or money or both? Say I these things as a man, or saith not the law the same? And if so, it is not a gain of oppression upon which Ministers live, seeing Gods law and mans law both assert their propriety; yet I would not be mistaken, as though I affirm the *ius Divinum* of Tythes; or plead for a maintenance to such a proportion; or, that Ministers should work onely for wages, feed the flock only for the Fleece sake; I hate such a mercenary spirit, and so do many of my brethren; and I trust we should still do, as some of us have done, even*

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be as zealous for God and faithful in our Ministry, with a little as with a liberal maintenance, 'if providence should alter the state of affairs amongst us; and should rejoicingly own a liberty to preach as a choice mercy, though we had not a Living to preach for; but, why a godly Minister should cast off an established maintenance to humor a sort of people; and why they should have a command to be hospitable, *1 Tim.* 3.2. and have nothing to support it, I know not; I think we may without sin before God, or offence to good men, own with thankfulness our present fulness; and I beseech you my brethren to consider, that since the Lord hath given us the places and people of many Idol-Ministers and lazy drones; what new tricks have been invented, and new Engines contrived to pluck that bread of allowance out of our mouths? Tythes, yea all settled maintenance hath been decayed; and how had we been reduced to our former indigency, if these mines had taken fire? but that the Lord by our Christian Magistrates, hath still secured our propriety and an establishment provided for them, who are but tenants at will, at least but for the lives of others; the want whereof hath much sated, both good Ministers and good people, and hath given opportunity to corrupt Patrons upon vacancies, to thrust in formal if not carnal Ministers passed upon them.

6. Lastly, Consider, how not only our persons have formerly been shot at by the Archers, and our lives in jeopardy, many of us every day; but that of late times, our office hath been much opposed; attempts have been made once and again, to prove not our maintenance only, but our Ministry also Antichristian, and this not only buzzed among our people by some errant *Seditaries*, but published in print with all virulent *Sarcasms* and invectives against us; plots have been laid, and parties made (formidable enough) to have carried it against us in a Parliamentary way: Oh! let us seriously and often reflect upon these and many other eminent acts of divine favour and bounty towards us, and let.

The bill for settling Ministers in their livings for their lives being passed.

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Scriptures, and relating to order onely, canonical and binding to all? it would be indeed a crown of beauty, and Diadem of glory upon our heads; if there was that peace among us as was betwixt *Miconius* and his Colleagues, concerning whom he useth these words, *Curriculum, certavimus, laboravimus, pugnavimus, vicimus & vicimus semper conjunctissime, when the watchmen of Israel do lift up their voice, and with their voice together, they do sing, when they see eye to eye, Isa. 52.8. When they all do speak the same things, when there are no divisions among them, but are perfectly joynd together in the same minde, and in the same judgement, 1 Cor. 1.10. But if we cannot attain this unity in circumstances, let us bless God, that we do it in fundamentals, and let our union in the head, untie us in the heart, carrying it with all tenderness one toward another, in differences of smaller moment under this assurance, that, *Ibi tandem convenimus, ubi Lutherus cum Zuinglio optime jam convenit*, there's no clashing in heaven betwixt *Luther* and *Zuinglius* about the Sacrament, we shall all be of one minde in heaven, and why should we clash upon earth? Though some of us dispense the Supper to a select company, judging it most agreeable to Gospel order and pattern, yet why should we urge this upon our brethren, who judge otherwise? or why should our Brethren urge a general admission upon us, Why should the disputes be so hot and contentes so high among brethren about modelling the Congregations, whether by casting out, or leaving out the scandalous and profane, when as we all own the Lords Supper to be a standing ordinance, and do not antiquate it with the Quakers, nor withhold the cup from our people with the Papists, nor maintain a Consummation with the *Lutherans* nor dispense it promiscuously, to all of age in our parishes (mad men and fools onely excepted) with some Episcopal men, but endeavor a pure administration agreeing in that as our great end) that it may be dispensed onely to visible Saints. Why should such wormwood and gall appear in our pens and Pulpets one against another upon this subject? have we not other work*

work to do? may we not imploy our flock better? would it not add more to Gods honour and our own also, if we did lay out that zeal which we spend one against another, against Papists and Impostors? Is it a time for Shepherds to quarrel, about folding of their Sheep, when Wolves are broke into the flock? Is it a time for Officers of an Army to dispute titles and trifles, when the enemy appears in the field with a formed Army against them? Is it a time for us to spend our strength in anger and animosities one against another, when the Nation swarms with Hereticks? when they make such havock of the flock in many places? and when they all combine against us? for however they differ among themselves, they agree in their hatred, and opposition of us; like a Brigado of horse, that Scout up and down in several parties, yet meet together at the head quarters: Surely the undermining of a Gospel-Ministry is the general Rendevouz of all our Sectaries, at least most of them; Oh then let the sence of danger perswade us to body in love, and the sence of duty provoke us to improve our personal safety, preaching opportunity, Gospel-liberty, freedom of communion, maintenance and Ministry most to the glory of a good God, and this we shall best do, and best reach the great end of God in our great deliverances, if we set up the Apostles counsel as our great way-mark, *Acts. 20. 28. Take heed unto your selves and to all the flock over which the holy Ghost hath made you overseers; to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood, and we shall better understand this text and our duty by perusing Master Baxter upon it, in his Gildes Salutaris.*

3. *This Doctrine hath a word of friendly advice to military men, which I hope shall meet with a friendly resentment, because it comes from a friend, with a friendly intent: I am no Cynick, nor apt to quarrel, if I was, I would be more prudent, then to enrage them by tart language, who have so often fought an enraged enemy in the open field, and more ingenuous, then to spend my choler against them, who have spit their blood for my safety: And there-*

therefore O ye valiant ones of Israel; consider how far this doctrine is applicable to you in that capacity; are the appearances of God eminent and immediate in the day of his peoples distress?

1. Consider how rare and skilful you were in all martial affairs, at your first entrance upon the war; how little of a Soldier as to the flights and stratagems of war, were found in you, at least most of you, when you first took the field; and yet what a teaching spirit from the Lord came upon you; how suddenly, even to admiration, did the Lord of wisdom teach your hands to war, and your fingers to fight? Pfal. 144. 1. So that a short time did make you expert in all the arts of war, as well as in the use of arms, and in all the stratagems and counsels and carriages of a well-ordered Bravall; that contempt of ye were able to countermine all your enemies; and their enmities went and pursue advantages with much warlike prudence; & did more Oh let this be owned in peace, as a signal mercy from the Lord, and as that which tended much to yours and our preservation, and to the gaining of all those freedoms for in these which we now enjoy; *Is a special opening providence, when the Lord qualifyeth person for employments.*

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such as would too much prove antiquity among all the Campes of the famed Heroes, Heroes to find a parallel of this Army, T. M. in the history of the Civil War, p. 114.

2. Consider how low your spirits were at your first taking up of Arms; what fears and troubles and terrors were upon your spirits, when ye first heard the found of the trumpet and the Alarm for war; how terrible the fight of an Army with banners displayed was, and how dreadfully the clashing of Armor sounded in your ears, were not many of you like the men of Israel who followed Gideon, *Judge. 7. 3.* Who when proclamation was made in the Army, *Who never is fearful and afraid, let him return early from mount Gilcad; there returned of the people twenty and two thousand;* would not such a licence for a retreat have found acceptance with many of you? did not you wish your selves in your shops again? at your employments again?

again? did you not blame your selves for your rash and forward underraking so-dangerous a service? and yet how did the Lord heighten your spirits? how did he cloath you with valour and undaunted courage? how did the spirit of the Lord come upon you, as upon *Saul*, *1 Sam. 11. 6*. What kindlings of anger and warlike indignation were in you, as in *Saul* when he saw the designe of the Ammonites to thrust out the right eyes of your brethren, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel? and how did the progress of the war declare both your skill and valour, your enemies themselves being Judges? *Valiant men of the valiant of Israel, expert in war, marching and watching with your swords upon your thighs, because of the fear in the night? Can. 3. 7, 8.*

3. Consider what *Midianitish Armies* for multitude, ye have encountered with? what numerous bodies have drawn up against you? how the Nations round about have been called in against you? How many Armies of men of different languages, interests, and Religions have been formed against you? And yet the sword of the Lord and of Gideon hath broken them in pieces, the Lord by you hath done unto them, *As unto the Midianites as to Sisera, as to Jabin at the brook of Kison, which perished at Endor and became as dung for the earth; their nobles have been made like Oreb and like Zeeb, and all their Princes like Zeba, and as Zalmunrab, who said let us take to our selves the houses of God in possession, Psa. 83. 9, 10, 11, 12. Nay, How have ye with the sharp threshing instrument of the power and justice of the most high God, thrashed the mountains and beat them small, and made the hills as chaff? How have ye fanned many of them? how hath the wind carried them away and the whirlwinde scattered them? Isa. 41. 15, 16. How hath this been made good, at home, abroad, by Land and by Sea, that ye and we may rejoyce together and glory in the Holy one of Israel.*

4. Consider what *personal perservations ye have had, how the Lord hath covered your heads in the day of Battail*: How many bullets have been guided by the hand of God to miss your bodies,

bodies, when they have flown like forms of hail about you; how they have glided off your Armor and not torn your garments, or rent your garments, & not rippled your skin or rased your skin, & not reach't your flesh or though your flesh hath been lashed, yet your lives have been secured; Oh consider the distinguishing providences that have been toward you, sometimes a right hand man dropping down, sometimes a left hand man, sometimes a pistol hath been fired at your breasts and would not go off; sometimes a sword hath been lift up to cleave your heads, and the Lord hath stayed the hand, as once he did *Arahams*, sometimes your horses have been slain under you, and ye have been mounted again or made an escape on foot: O let your personal deliverances be gathered up and recorded by you.

5. Consider all those great things, which the Lord hath wrought for you, and by you in this and other Nations; What sieges have been raised by you, when the distressed of your brethren have been very sad, as *Glocester* and other places: What strong Towns and Cities have been carried by you, as *Colchester* and other Forts and Cittadels: What eminent battails have been fought and won by you? what slaughter hath been made in the Camps of your enemies? with what unequal numbers have ye taken the field sometimes? and at all times, almost, come off with far different loss? How, again and again Armies have been raised, and those Armies have been routed; forces levied, and those forces have been levelled even with the ground; the proudest and stoutest of them, Moab-like have been trodden as straw for the dunghill: How various, how voluminous have the mercies of the Lord been to you? that in all encounters ye have come off with the conquest, at least the issue of the war proclaims you Conquerors; so that the Lord hath made good that promise to you, *Job*.

1.5. *There shall not be any man able to stand before thee all the days of thy life, Nay Chap. 2. 10. The hearts of all your enemies have melted, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you; for the experiences of many years*

years and many wars hath proved the truth of that great promise, *Iſa. 54. 15. Bebold they ſhall ſurely gather together, but not by me; that all the gatherings together and muſters of the enemy have been without the Lord; for whoſoever hath gathered together againſt you, hath ſain before you; No weapon that hath been formed againſt you, hath bin thereto, proſpered; this hath hitherto been your heritage, and that it may be continued in mercy unto you, and ye may be continued as a mercy to the land, and to the Saints; let me commend ſome few things unto you.*

1. *Do not ſacrifice to your nets, nor burn incenſe to your own drags; do not ſay your own ſword and your own bow hath gotten you the victory, and ſo ſhut out the King of Saints and his anointed ones from any ſhare in your many victories: Take heed of Elations and up liſtings of ſpirit, in aſcribing too much to your own prowels and policy, and ſo, carry away the honor of the day from the Lord of Hoſts: it is much a fault in many, who will not own God in you, nor acknowledge you as a Battle-ax in the hands of the great God, whereby he hath broken the enemy, and daſht in pieces the powers of the world which hath ſtood up againſt the Lord and his people: and it would be much your ſin, if ye ſhould (by a proud Monoply) engroſs the glory of the work wholly to your ſelves: if any thing of this nature hath been upon your ſpirits, or ſaln unwarily from your lips, let me beſpeak you in the words of an excellent woman, and think it not diſhonour to be counſelled by the mouth of a woman, though *Abimelech* did to fall by the hand of a woman, *1 Sam. 2. 3. Talk no more ſo-exceeding proudly, let not arrogancy come forth of your mouth, for the Lord is a God of knowledge and by him actions are weighed: He that trieth the heart and weigheth the ſpirits, will certainly weigh ſuch carriages, and finde them too light; if ſouldiers ſay with *Ajax, I know no God but my ſword, they ſhall ſurely finde, that the ſword of Gideon, is but a wooden blade, if the ſword of the Lord be not with it; be much in working that paſſage upon your hearts, Iſa. 10. 15. Shall the ax boast it***

is self against him that breeth with it & or shall the law magnifie it self against him that shaketh it? &c. Ye know, concerning whom these words were spoken, proud Scamcherib, and upon what occasion, to wit, the vaunting of his success in wars; and what follows? why vers. 16. *Before the Lord, the Lord of Hosts shall send among his fat ones (principal Officers) leanness, and under his glory he shall kindle a fire*: May not that contempt which the Lord hath poured upon some (ones of you) spring much from this root of pride? I onely interrogate, and such are the respects I beart to the Restorers of our peace and liberty, that I wish the Dream may be to those that hate you, and the interpretation unto your enemies, Dan. 4. 19.

2. *Open the people of the Lord who have opened you, and the cause ye have ventured in*; They have had a large share in the fraughtage of that ship, which by the blessing of God, hath been steered by you through stormy Seas into safe harbour. Read often *Prov. 27. vers. 10. Thine own friend, and thy fathers friends forsake not*: You cannot own God fully, if you disown his people, who under him have assisted in the work; ye have had many Auxiliaries, who have helped the Lord and you against the mighty. Some have jeopardied their lives unto death with you in the high places of the field, *Judg. 5. 18*. It would be very discontinuous to lay such aside, as *deposuisti*, and overlook them as men unworthy of your knowledge, now ye sit in the high places of the Nation: An heathen mans conscience smote him for this crime, *Gen. 41. vers. 9*. and shall the guilt thereof rest upon you? And some again have been upon the Mount, when you have been fighting with your enemies in the valley, and they have not been your work friends; neither have ye received the least aid from them; When *Moses* held up his hands, *Israel* prevailed, and when he let down his hands *Amalek* prevailed, *Exod. 17. vers. 11*. Ye owe much of your success and safety in the

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conquered and bewitched them that they could not fight. And did not ye at Edge-hill say with others, how few the fruits of prayer? and did not ye receive the fruit of it?

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late wars to a praying people; It was observed (and it was very observable) that immediately after monthly Fasts, ye got ground of the enemy in some places: did not the Lord proclaim in your Camp, that this and that victory was, as well the procurement of a praying Assembly, as of a fighting Army? And that it was, as well fetched from heaven by the tears of his Sanctuary, as finished upon earth by the blood of his Soldiers? Indeed, ye deserve blame, if ye slight them, who have wept and mourned, fasted and prayed, yea wrastled hard for you, and by whom the war hath been much carried on in heaven; and we are equally blame-worthy, if we slight you, who have laboured and marched, and run the hazard of limbs and lives, yea fought and bled, and by whom the war hath been carried on upon earth: *The Lord heal all hard-thoughtedness betwixt you and us, and make us one, as ever in the truth and cause of Jesus.*

3. Be humbled before the Lord, for all the acts of violence and injustice, either acted or permitted by you, in the heat of war; for all the breaches of Oaths or Covenants with God or man, for all your failing in, or falsifying of the Vows, which ye made to God in the day of your distress: And that there hath been any root bearing, *John Knox*, wormwood or gall springing up among you, that of you and his selves men have arose *speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them, Act. 20. vers. 19.* It is too evident, and hath been, that the File-leaders and heads of many errors (that I say not of all) have been either of, or found shelter in the Army; both have many weaknesses at this day living: It took no great impression upon us that some stragling persons blurted off their pot-guns at us; but when we were drawn upon by the Soul-dier, or by a sort of men abetted by them, and marching under their protection, this was great grief of heart unto us; this was a sword in our bones, and drew tears from our eyes in our secret mournings before the Lord: This made our prophane neighbours scoffe at us, when they heard those truths oppoted, those doctrines contradicted.

A great Queen said, the feared more the prayers of *John Knox*, Complices, than an Army of thirty thousand men, *Y. ap in Mat. 18. 19.*

disted those ways of the Lord evil-spoken of, and those Ordinances slighted, for which ye and we had contested so long with tears and blood : This made the Cavalier-Minister laugh in their sleeves, and deride when they beheld the faithful Ministers (faithful to the Lord, to you, and to the cause contended for) vilified, disdained, and traduced, and that by a party of our own Army, when they themselves met with no such trouble from them : This we looked upon as very disingenuous to us, and as unsuitable returns to the Lord.

The Lord clear up his great Gospel truths above all possibility of mistake by his own people, and fill the earth with the knowledge of the Lord as the water covers the Sea, Isa. 11. 9. *that ye, and we may go forth by the footsteps of the flocke, that ye may feed your kids by the shepherds tents, and all of us may know where the Lord Jesus feedeth, and where he maketh his flock to rest at noon, Cant. 1. vers. 7, 8. For why should any of you be as they that turn aside by the flocks of strangers ?*

4. *Quickens up that ancient zeal, those burning affections, and that fixedness of spirit in you, for the Lord, his truth, his cause, his Ministry and his people which once ye had : O if ye find your present peace and pleasure, honor and full estates, dignity and dominion to begin raise unwholesome dampns in your souls, the sense of grace received and mercies received (so eminent as yours have been, and the Nation in you) will excellently scatter them, if well improved : Oh then ! the Champions of Israel, who have vanquished Christ and his Churches enemies in the field draw up gallantly against corruptions in your own hearts, As ye have subdued Kingdomes, so work righteousness : As ye have bled for Christ in time of war, so bow down to Christ in time of peace : As ye have sealed the walls of the mighty, so pull down the strong holds of sin within your own bosomes : As ye have cast down the high ones of the earth from their seats, so cast down imaginations, and every high thought which exalteth it self against*

gainst the knowledge of God : As ye have captivated Nations and people to the obedience of your commands, so bring all the thoughts (the Nations and people of those little worlds your hearts) into captivity to the obedience of Jesus Christ, and his Gospel-commands, 2 Cor. 10. vers. 5. Your war is an In-land war now ; the weapons of your warfare are not now carnal, but spiritual : your enemies are not High-landers, but In-landers, not Cavaliers, but Corruptions, not the wilde Irish, but the wilde Asles Colt, principles of proud, corrupt nature : And now, as your conflicts are harder, so your conquests will be happier : As your enemies are more dangerous, so your victory will be more glorious, Prov. 16. vers. 32. he that ruleth his own spirit, is better than he that scaleth a City : Oh it would be very sad, and much sadden the hearts of many of your Christian friends, if any of you who *Sampson*-like, have slain the Philistins, should your selves be slain by a Philistin *Delilah* ; that your locks should be cut, and the strength of the Lord should depart from you ; Oh how would the Daughters of the Philistins rejoyce, how would the Daughters of the uncircumcised triumph, when this should be told in *Gath*, and published in the streets in *Askelon*, and how would the Daughters of *Israel* weep over you, and say, *How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battel !* the spiritual warfare : *How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished !* 2 Sam. 1. vers. 24, 25, 27. Oh then, stand to your Arms ! make good your *Sacramentum militare*, your military oath to be true to Christ and his cause ; there is not such a thing in a Gospel-sense, belonging to your Christian warfare, as an honorable retreat ; not such a word of command in all Christs military Discipline, as fall back, and lay down your arms, till called off by death, as a Reverend Divine saith : Oh then ! now the war is ended, and the Lord hath given us peace by your means, Armour, attend that spiritual work, and spiritual war, and go to the Armory of the great Captain of our salvation, opened by *St. Paul*, Eph. 6. vers. 11, 12, 13, &c. and take out
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 pag. 374.

such peeces as you want, yea every pece of Armour, that you finde in that spiritual Magazine, *that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand;* that so having fought the good fight of faith, ye may lay hold on eternal life, and receive that *Coronam militarem*, that Crown of righteousness, which the Lord will give to all those, who love his appearing, *2 Tim. vers. 4-7, 8.*

4. *Here is a word from the Lord to Mariners, and Sea-trading men*: And O that our Sea-Commanders and Souldiers would rightly improve this truth! If this poor Treatise shall come into any of your hands, the good Lord set it upon your hearts; If the appearances of God be eminent and immediate to any in a day of distress, sure they have been so to you; ye of all men do see much of the power and providence of God, at least may see it, if your eyes be opened, and your minds faithfully enlightned: The Psalmist tells us (and though I be not a Seafaring man yet I believe it) *they that go down to the Seas in ships, that do busines in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; for he commandeth and raiseth up the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof, they mount up to the heavens, they go down again to the depths, Psal. 10. vers. 23, 24, 25, 26.* Cannot ye comment upon this Text? cannot ye feel to this truth? their soul is melted because of trouble, runs as thin as water, they are ready to dye for fear of death. *Junius* understands it of extreme vomiting, as if they were casting up their very hearts: *One doubted, whether he should reckon Mariners, who were put to Sea, amongst the living or the dead, in the censure or Registry of a Nation: Another says, that a man will go to the Sea at first, I wonder not, but to go a second time, it is madness: They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, nutant nante & vacillant cerebro & pedibus*, there is a great deal of elegance in the phrase, and it is very significant; men that are full of drink, that are loaden with liquor, they go with a very unsteady and tottering gate; reeling now against this wall, and now against that, if they walk in a narrow street;

street; so Mariners in a storm, are thrown first on one side, then on the other side of the ship : A tempest is a sad Sea-quake which throws all on heaps, nothing hardly keeps due order, and its right place in the ship : again a man that is down drunk (as the phrase is) is reason-struck, his intellects are shattered, he is fit for no head employment ; so Mariners in a storm, are at their wits end, all their skill and strength fail them at once ; *All their wisdom is swallowed up*, Heb. that is, the art of Navigation is now of no use unto them : Card and Compass and all laid aside, and forced to let the ship run a drift : hath not this been your case in great streſs of weather ? Have ye not met with such a storm at sea, which hath brought forth all these fears and terrors in you ? have ye not often thought ye should have been entombed within walls of water, and your bodies should have become a prey to sea-monsters ? especially when engaged in a dreadful Sea-sight. But was the sea alwayes rough, the windes always high, the ship alwayes in danger to be split or sunk ? no, Ver. 28. *Then they cryed to the Lord in their trouble* ; then if ever, a storm at sea will make seamen pray, though they seldom do it on dry land ; yea cry : thus *Jonah Chap. i. Ver. 5.* Then, to wit in a storm, *The Mariners were afraid, and cryed every man to his God ;* *Q*uæ nescit orare discat navigare, *He Rare felicitat cannot pray, let him go to sea ;* if he fears God or dauntant felicity, he cannot but pray : but what ? doth God hear *bua ara*. their cry ? yea, *he bringeth them out of their distress*, ver. 29. *He maketh the storme a calm, so that the waves thereof are still :* Thus it was in that great storme, *Matth. 8. vers. 26.* when the ship was covered with waves, through the violence of windes, which rolled and dashed them over it, *The Lord Jesus rebuked the windes and the sea, and there was a great calme ;* he did but once chide those creatures, and they submitted ; but against how many chidings of the Lord do these rebellious hearts of ours stand out ? winde and sea will rise up in judgment against us at the great day, and will condemn us, every drop of water in that sea, upon which you fall, will be a witness of your non-

monstrous rebellion and disobedience: But to go on; how do the Marriners improve this mercy? why, ver. 30. *then are they glad, because they are quiet, so be bringeth them to their desired haven:* Hath this been your case? hath the Lord calmed a tempestuous sea, and steered your course by a good hand of providence, to your desired harbour? Let me ask you, not whether you were glad, but how you express your gladness? did ye not sing, and drink, and (wear and roar, when your fear was past? hath the fence of deliverance wrought you into an humble, holy praising, and thankfull frame? which hath been the first place ye have visited, when come to land, the Tavern or the Temple? and which hath been your first work, pouring forth your soules in praises to God, or pouring in of ale or wine, to intoxicate your brains? *have ye been drunk with wine, wherein is excess, or have ye been filled with the spirit, speaking to your selves in Psalmes and Hymnes, and spiritual songs, making melody in your hearts and singing to the Lord,* Eph. 5. ver. 18, 19. Oh first! is this all the return that God expects? Is this all the improvement ye should make of so great a mercy? surely no, ver. 31. *The holy Ghost directis to a better; O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his works unto the children of men: that they would confesse it to the Lord, both in secret, and in Societies, so the word importeth: O friends! if ye read this doctrine, read also your own duty in it: If deliverances engage any unto duty, sure yours do; yours are as eminent as any, as immediate as any; Ther's nothing but the hand of God seen in your preservations in land-deliverances something of the creature is seen, and man steps in for a share, either by his power or policy: prudence or providence; but who can rebuke the windes and the seas, but onely their great Creatour? *Cesarem vobis*, will not calme a rough sea: such charmes will not be obeyed by the wilde Ocean: That King found this true, when walking upon the shore, he commanded the tide to stop his course; but so little the sea regarded the commands of this proud king, though within his own Dominions, that*

that he found his safety lay move in his heels, then in his head : He alone who hath placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetuall decree, can stay the tide in its full career, and still the windes in their loudest bluster, Jer. 5. ver. 22. How apparently did the windes and sea fight for in Eighty eight, so that the enraged Spaniard said, *Christ was turned Lutheran*— Oh then ! own God *Othogessi-*

in all your sea-deliverances, be awakened to a fence of *meus obsecrus* them ; improve them upon a spiritual account ; wipe *ne rabulis* off that imputation which is cast upon you, by men of *Beza*, In-land Countries, that there is little of Religion among *Silets, ne* you : Look after, and lay hold on the Lord Jesus Christ, *Dilectos b'e* least yea be thrown over-board, in a state of impenitency *navigare* and unbelief, and sink down, not onely like lead into *sentiant* the bottome of the sea, but into the bottomless pit also ; was the

Oh 'tis sad going to Hell by land or water ! O get into Speech of an Christ, who will be a *Noah's* ark unto you, in which ye Heathen to shall not onely sail safely to an earthly haven, but into wicked pet-heaven ; and when the Lord brings you off from a sea-sons, that voyage, with broken masts, torne sails, and a wether-failed in a beaten ship, let the sense of that great deliverance affect storm with your hearts, and if ye have not already done it, *Give* him.

diligence to make your calling and election sure ; Tis the Apostles advice to all, 2 Pet. 1. 10. and mine to you, shew your seriousness in a point of so great importance : it was

well said by a reverend Divine, *Thy bed is very soft, or thy heart very hard, if thou canst sleep soundly in an uncertain* *Mr. Trap* *in loc.* condition. Oh minde this as the main ; for this being obtained, though you should suffer a wrack at sea, yet *verse*

11. *An entrance shall be administered unto you, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ* : The Metaphor is accommodated unto you ; ye shall not get into Heaven, as a ship hardly puts into the haven, with Anchors lost, Cables rent, sails torn, and masts broken, (which is the case of many) but shall sail in with masts up, Cordage whole, Tacklings sound, Sails full, Flags displayed, top and top gallant, trumpets sounding, and so shall everlastingly rejoyce, in the everlasting King-

Kingdome of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

5. *The naturall improvement of this Doctrine gives much by way of advice to the recovered ones of the land, to those whom the Lord hath brought off from beds of languishment, and fetched up even from the gates of death :* And truly the number of such is great, scarce ever greater; the Providences of God have been sad and humbling, sundry times in the land, and in particular places: yet seldome hath a visitation been so general, both as to persons and places. *The pale horse and his Rider* have passed through our several Towns, and Countries, like an army in their march, and taken up short quarters, but of late they have billeted amongst us, taking up not onely their summer but winter quarters also, so that we may take up the Churches complaint, *Jer. 8. vers. 20. The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved,* sickness and death have not removed their quarters, *neither is there any amongst us, that knoweth how long,* their abode shall be, *Psal. 74. vers. 9.* Their commission being under the Privy Seal of Heaven : and if their hostilities be to great this winter season, what wasting and desolation may we fear, at the time, *when Kings go forth to battle ? 2 Sam. 11. ver. 1.* if winter agues be so violent, what will the summer feavers be ? if these diseases sweep our Townes so much, what will the before of destruction do ? If we have run with the footmen, and they have wearied us, then how shall we contend with horses ? if we have been wearied in the land of *Jordan ?* O that the sence of our present sickness, and the fear of an approaching mortality invading the land, was set home upon all our hearts, that we might improve the Lords counsel, *Hos. 14. 2. to take with us words, and turn to the Lord, and say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously ;* that we might prepare to meet our God, with an entreaty of peace, before the decree come forth ! Oh that all, especially the men of wisdom in the Nation, *would hear the rod, and who hath appointed it, Mic. 6. vers. 9.* and receive teaching from it : My humble advice from the Lord, to those who have been sick, and now are well ; who

who are now in the land of the living, when as many, labouring under the said distempers, are gone down to the chambers of death, is this,

I. *That you would own with thankfulness the healing mercies of God, whereby you have been restored: Let your thoughts often reflect upon your former weakness, what pains and faintings seized upon you; what the opinion of your Physicians, and the fears of your Relations were; when your pulses beat low and softly, when you drew your breath short and painfully; when paleness had covered your faces, when the grasshopper was a burden to you, such was your weakness, Job 16. vers. 16. when the shadow of death was on your eye-lids, and all the symptoms of death appeared in you; and all this, at such a time, when graves were opened very many in most places; when God himself was the preacher, and that upon this text, Isa. 40. vers. 6, 7. *All flesh is grass, and the goodliness of it as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; which was fully confirmed; every passing bell being a proof of the point, and every dead corps a reason of the doctrine; so that if ever, now it might safely be affirmed, the people is grass; and you, as grass might have withered into dead hay; and though flowers, might have faded into loathsome Carcasses, if the Lord had not preserved a secret sap at the root: Oh consider! to receive a message of life from the Lord, when you had received a message of death from man; to be kept alive by his almighty power, when you were within an hairs breadth of death, is a mercy worth the owning at all times, but calls for more abundant thankfulness, at such a time as this was, when so many, some out of the same houses, and many out of the same Towns, have been carried forth unto the places of burial; when many of those had the same advantages, for life, yea greater, some from men and means, then ye had, yet they are dead, and ye are alive, Oh these considerations lay great engagements of thankfulness upon you, especially if you seriously take notice what**

what your sickness was, by which ye received an ailment from the Lord; it was not an ordinary disease; it hath been very much *ludibrium medicorum*, few Physicians have found out the true cause, and the right cure of it; the distempers have so varied, and the effects have been so different in several persons and places; so that with the Egyptian Sorcerers, all have been forced to confess, it was no other then *the finger of God*: The Lord having made good upon us that threatening, *Deut. 28. Verse 61. In bringing a sickness among us, which is not written in the book of the Law*, a Scripture, parallel whereof, in every particular, cannot be found; I shall represent it to you under these Considerations;

1. *It was general*: no County no Town, no Family scarcely escaped the rod; nay almost all persons found some alterations in their bodies, as tendencies to that disease, having as large a Commission, as to smiting, as the destroying Angel had, *Ezek. 9. vers. 5, 6. Go ye through the City, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young; both maids, and little children, and women.*

2. *It was sudden*: Many Diseases have their *Prodromi* o's, their forerunners, which bring news of their coming some dayes or weeks before they seize a man; but when men were in their apprehensions perfectly well, and at their labour, perceiving no symptoms of a sickness, they were suddenly surpris'd, some in the Towns, some in the fields, and brought home sick; As if a man should walk in a Corporation, and suddenly should be snapt by the Sergeants, and carried to the Jaile, when he feared nothing less, *1 Thes 5. 3.*

3. *It was violent*: It seized many strong men with that violence at the first onset, as though it would strike but once; many thinking, at their first surprisall, they had been dropping into the grave, like that *Job 16. v. 12, 13, 14. I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder; he hath also taken me by the neck, and shaken me to peeces, and set me up notes, in loc. for his marks: His archers compass me about, he cleaveth my reins.*

Read Mr.
Jackson's
notes, in loc.

reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground; He breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me like a Giant.

4. *It was weakening;* the strength of the strong man was suddenly taken from him, that he was either chained to his bed, or like an old man, walked with his staffe in his hand through age, *Zech. 8. ver. 4. for Job 6. ver. 4. the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit. And Psal. 38. 8, 10. I am feeble and sore broken, &c. My heart panteth, my strength faileth me, by reason of inappetency, Psal 107. ver. 18. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat.*

5. *It was languishing;* many diseases do their work in a few dayes, either the distemper wears off, and health returns, or else sickness prevails and death comes: In some cases, the Malesfour is committed till the next Goal-delivery, and then set free with a little scarre in his hand: But in other cases, a man is kept prisoner from Sessions to Assizes, and from Assizes to Sessions, and knows not when he shall have his freedom, or whether his life will be spared at last. So some diseases have their fixed periods of time, after which health is restored, but in this distemper, many have been referred from Sessions to Assizes, have had many hopefull intervalls, and yet are detained, bound over from the feaver to a quartan ague, and after long detainment, find little strength, and as little hopes of life at the last: See *Job 13. ver. 26, 27, 28. and chap. 16. ver. 8. thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me: grief had made furrows in his face, and his tears filled them.*

7. *It was inevitable:* No way to avoid the stroke: no V.d. Trap. Antidote would prevent it; no closet could secure a- *in loc.* gainst it, as *1 King. 22. ver. 34.* like that *Psal. 90. ver. 5;*

6. Arrows fly swiftly and secretly: though Ahab had disguised himself that he might not be known, and armed himself that he might not be wounded, yet a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote him between the joynts of the harness.

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7. *It was mortal to many persons in many places:* 1. In the present stroke some never came off from their sickbeds, till they were carried to their death beds, to wit, their graves: 2. In the effects and consequents of it; though the disease it self kill'd not some presently, yet it slippe them into Dropies, Consumptions, and Quartans, which have since been mortall to many: Now then set home these considerations, & give God the glory of your lives in the words of the text; ascribe your healing onely unto him, in the words of *Eliphaz*, Job 5. ver. 18. *He murthereth sore, and bindeth up, he woundeth and his hands make instruments, all the dayes of your life in the house of the Lord,* Isa. 38. ver. 20.

II. *Make good your sick-bed thoughts, and purposes;* what you intended when sick, be intent upon now well; what you then purposed, now practise: sick people usually have the best minds, but the worst memories; when they are under an arrest from the Lord, and brought within sight of the Prison; then conscience is awakened, then their debts to God lie heavy upon their spirits, then their thoughts are how to make even with God, and fly to their surety; then if mercy will but put in Bail for them, if God will but spare them a little, before they go hence and be no more; if he will but have patience, they will pay him all: No Saint under heaven can promise fairer and further then they, what they will do, and what they will be if the Lord restore them to health, *Luke 11. ver. 24. The unclean spirit often goeth out upon a sick-bed;* there is a cessation from sin, that work goes not on then, but alas, sad experience hath let us see too often, that words are but winde, and all the sick-bed resolutions vanish into air; *the unclean spirit returns,* when restored to health, and finds the heart sweet and garnished, *then goeth he and taketh to him, seven other spirits more wicked then himself, and they enter in and dwell there;* and the last estate of that man is worse then the first. As health comes on Religion goes off, and they forget the vows of the Lord that were up-
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on them: Indeed it fares thus very often with the Saints themselves; what a vow did *Jacob* bring his soul under when in distress, *Gen. 28. ver. 20, 21, 22.* yet this good man made slow haste to perform it, until God was fain to *Conj. Paul. 119. 9th.* jog him, and be as a faithful remembrancer unto him, *Gen. 35. ver. 1, 2, 3.* then and not till then did *Jacob* purge his family, and go up to *Bethel* to perform his vow, which computing the time, was about seven and twenty years after he made it; good *H Ezekiel* fell into this distemper was so terrible, you shall hear how his spirit was up in thankfulness riled in his to God, *Isa. 38. ver. 19. The living, the living, they shall praise thee, as I do this day, the father to the children shall for sin that make known thy truth* (that is) I will perpetuate thy memorial of this mercy, by handing down the knowledge thereof to my children; yea, my command shall be upon them, as a special charge in my last will, that they shall give God the glory of my recovery; good words spoken, and probably from a real intention at that time, long, I am But alas! the fence of this great mercy was but an Ephraimera, it soon wore off, *2 Chron. 32. ver. 25. Hezekiah repented not again according to the benefit done unto him*: for and made the recovery was signal, attended with many remarkable many and circumstances, as

1. The sentence of death was reversed, which was passed tetrations of in *foro externo*, for God had sent him a special message by amendment, the hand of *Isaiab*, to set his house in order, for saith he, became as thou shalt die and not live, chap. 38.

Object. But did not the Prophet speak his own apprehensions only, considering the mortality of that disease which had seized upon him?

Sol. No, he prefaced his message with, *Thus saith the Lord*, and 'tis certain, he knew the Lords mind concerning him, (at least so much as was then revealed) there being not any person then alive, who was *Confiliarius* & *secretoribus* to the most high God, more then *Isaiab* was, and who knew more of the counsels of Heaven, witnesse his glorious and Evangelicall promises, and Predictions.

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2. The reversal of the sentence of death, was the single return and procurement of his own prayers and tears, for ver. 5. The Lord gives a second command to the Prophet, to go to *Hezekiah*, and deliver this message from him : *This saith the Lord, the God of David thy father ; I have heard thy prayers, I have seen thy tears, so that as Hananab said of Samuel her son, 1 Sam. i. ver. 27. For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him : The same might Hezekiah, for my life I prayed and wept, and the Lord hath given me my petition.*

Nay the Lord makes a large addition to his life, *Psal. 21.4.* he asked life and the Lord gave him length of days, the life of man twice told, in our ordinary law compute, even fifteen years, which did very much accent the Lords mercy, (seeing *Hezekiah* was so exceeding earnest for life, having then no Son to succeed in the throne and the affairs of Church and state being very unsettled.

4. This also gave a great *Emphasis* to the mercy, in that he had such a suddain return to his prayer ; The Lord did not make him wait long for answer, thereby tormenting his spirit with perplexing fears, but before the Prophet was gone out into the middle Court, *2 Kin. 20.4.* the word of the Lord came unto him, the Lord met him and sent him back with a message of life to *Hezekiah*: Oh tis matter of great comfort to have a quick dispatch of business, especially in things relating to life and death.

5. Yet further, the immediate appearance of power from the Lord, in effecting the cure, doth marvailously greaten the mercy ; that *Hezekiah* should be visited with so sharpe a distemper, probably the plague of pestilence (for *Shechen* signifies an hot ulcer, boil, or pusto, and may refer to a Plague sore also) however the disease in it self was mortal; and that to slight an application, as a plaister of figs should perfect his recovery, and that suddainly within three dayes, *2 King. 20.5.* whereas we finde lighter distempers are long in carrying off, where able Physitians are consulted with and all means attempted. 6. And

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6. And then, that the great God should work a miracle in heaven, to confirm his faith in the certainty of the cure, that he should command the Sun to a retrograde motion, to go back ten degrees, not onely the shadow upon the dial of *Ahaz*, for that had not been so visible and universal, but the body of the Sun in the heaven, for so tis, *Isa. 38. 8. So the Sun turned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down*; whereby that day became ten hours longer, then otherwise it should have been, allowing half an hour for a degree, and the motion of the Sun regular in its going backward and coming forward: which things with safety may be supposed, seeing the miracle was so notable and amazing, that the King of *Babylon* (put on 'tis likely by his Astrologers) sent Ambassadors on purpose, as to congratulate *Hezekiah's* recovery, so to know the certainty and manner of that great wonder (a brute or flying report whereof he had heard) *2 Chron. 32. 31.*

Now though *Hezekiah* was a good man (few better) and had obtained of the Lord such a notable cure, circumstantiated with so many miracles, yet he was no sooner come into the world again, but the Pompe, and Grandeur of it wash't away the sense of this great mercy; for being taken with the King of *Babylons* complement, he shews his Embassadors all his treasures, and that out of pride and ostentation, *2 Kin. 20. 12, 13.* And therefore his friends, watch narrowly over your own hearts, and be earnest in prayer, that the Lord would keep them in an humble and holy frame, or else, you'l soon finde that as your old companions and corruptions will complement your spirits into their former frame.

III. *Commune with your own hearts*, be very strict and serious in your enquiries, why the Lord hath so afflicted you; *God doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men*, *Lam. 3. 33.* It is foreign to the nature of God, who is a God of mercies, to delight in acts of cruelty towards his creatures, or causelesly to chastize his own children: A

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discreet Father doth not take the rod, untill his child provokes him by some miscarriage; nor doth the Father of spirits (by whom actions are weighed) correct his covenant ones untill they have offended, *Psalm 89. 30, 31, 32. He will not visit with the rod untill they have transgressed; nor with stripes, untill iniquity hath been committed*: The widow of *Sarepha*, so soon as ever her son was dead, presently chargeth her sins with his death, and laies his blood at sins door, *1 King. 17. 18. What have I to do with thee thou man of God? Art thou come to call my sins into remembrance and to slay my son?* Holy David toucheth the same string in that mournful ditty of his, *Psalm 38. 3, 4, 5. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thy anger, neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sins, for mens iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me;* here he speaks of his sins in the gross sum, but afterwards descends to particularize that sin, which he owned as the introduct cause of his sickness; *My wound sink and are corrupt because of my foolishness*: The word signifieth unadvised rashness, saies Mr. *Trap*. And tis probable he meaneth that particular sin in the business of *Uriah*: Thus the Apostle writeth the *Corinthians* sin in their unworthy receiving the Lords Supper, upon the teachers of their sickness; and the cause of their death upon their grave stones, *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep, 1 Cor. 11. 30.* Oh then, let your spirits make diligent search, as *Asaph* did, be much in searching untill you have found out the true cause of your late distempers.

I shall lend you some help in your serious enquiry, by shewing you what sins are mentioned in Scripture, as introduct of sickness, and which God either threatneth or punisheth with diseases: As,

1. *Covetousness*, *Isa. 57. 17. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth and smote him, I hid me and was wroth, and he went forwardly in the way of his heart.*
2. *Deceit*, *Mic. 6. 10, 11, 12, 13. Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure*

sure which is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked ballances, and with the bagge of deceitful weights? The inhabitants have spoken lyes, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth: Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins.

3. *Murmuring, 1 Cor. 10. 10. Neither murmur ye as some of them murmured and were destroyed of the destroyer, Num. 14. 27 &c. Say unto them, as truly, as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears so will I do unto them; your carcases shall fall in this wilderness, and all that were numbered of you according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward which have murmured against me, doubtless ye shall not come into the land concerning which I swore to make you dwell therein. Lay this to heart, for this sin is as Epidemical as our sicknesses.*

4. *Neglect of Religious education of children, Ezek. 16. 20, 21. Moreover, thou hast taken thy sons and daughters, whom thou hast born unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured; Is this of thy whoredoms a final matter? That thou hast slain my children, and delivered them, to cause them to pass through the fire for them? therefore verse 23. Wo, wo unto thee, saith the Lord God.*

5. *Covenant breaking, Levit. 26. 25. And I will bring a sword upon you that shall avenge the quarrel of my Covenant, and when ye are gathered together within your Cities. I will send the pestilence among you.*

6. *Formal profession, and hypocritie, Ananias and Sapphira his wife so sadly bear witness to this, who for their spiritual juggling and deceit, were not onely smitten with sickness, but with suddain death, Act. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.*

7. *Undue receiving of the Lords Supper, 1 Cor. 11. 30. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep.*

8. *Herefies, Apoc. 2. 22. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her, into great tribulation.*

9. *Want of due respect unto, and fear of, the great name of God, Dent. 28. 38, 59. If thou wilt not observe, to do*

do all the words of this Law, that are written in this book, That thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, **THE LORD THY GOD**; then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. Cause these sins, as *Joshuah* did the Tribes of Israel, 7.16. to pass before your consciences, to finde out the *Achan*, for which the Lord hath so sorely afflicted you, and having found out those particular sins, be humbled for them, repent of them, and carefully avoid all future tendencies unto them, as *Samuel* advised Israel, 1 Sam. 7.3. Put away the strange gods from among you, and *Apheroth*; So do I you, put away from you the love of all sins, and especially *Apheroth*, that sin which hath been the root of your disease, and think you hear the Lord Jesus by his spirit, speaking these words unto you, *Behold, ye are made whole, sin no more lest a worse thing come unto you*, Joh. 5.14. And improve your late visitation with the present opportunities of grace, That ye may be partakers of Gods Holiness, Heb. 12. 10. Consecrate your lives which ye have received a new from the dead unto the Lord, devote your selves wholly to the service of the great God; let me bespeak you in the words of the Apostle, 1 Pet. 4. 2. That ye live no longer the rest of your time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God: and that not onely in the general duties of your general Callings as Christians, but with a special eye to your particular standings, and capacities, as Magistrates, Ministers, or as Christians so and so related, and qualified: Three things are hinted in this verse.

1. That the time of mans abode in the flesh is fixed and determined by God, That *without*, and residue of time is stated in heaven; I may here allude by way of resemblance, unto a piece of cloath, which, as to the number of yards, is laid in the warp so soon as brought to the Weaver, and every hour he works in the woof, he lessens the bulk of yarn that is wrapped upon the beam, untill at length, he finisheth the whole piece, and cuts it off, leaving

ing nothing but the thrums behind: the heathen had this in their three fatal sisters: And *Job* alludes to it, *Chap. 7. 6.* *My days are swifter than a Weavers shuttle*; before man is born into the world, whilst his substance is yet imperfect in the wombe of his mother, like raw yarn in the shop, as all his members are in Gods book; so the measure of life is fixed in the appointment of his great Creator; and every day he lives, Weaves off somewhat of his life, until at length nothing is left upon the brain, but the thrums of a crazy and putrid carcass, which is cut off and thrown into the grave: *Hezekiah* alludes to this, *Isa. 38. 10, 12.* *I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years; mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherds tent, I have cut off like a Weaver my life.*

2. *Whilst man lives to the lusts of men, he lives not according to the Law of his Creator: Ego te non Cateline genui, sed Patrie,* as he said to his son, I begat thee not to serve *Catiline* but thy Country, so speaks the Lord *Jehovah* to man, I created thee not to serve man but thy Maker, not to live according to thy own or other mens lusts, but according to my laws, now the lusts of the flesh, and the laws of an holy God, they are inconsistent and opposite each to other: It is a sad thing to be a servant of men in many cases, but in none so sad as in this: *It was the great English Cardinals complaint, in the day of his distress, If I had served my God with half that faithfulness, as I have served my King, he would not have left me a w,* or to this fence: Many men have rued it, and will at the great day of accounts, that they have been such slaves to the lusts of men; their pride, avarice, ambition, uncleanness, &c. And have so cast off the easie and noble yoke of Gods laws, many servants have much to answer for, the Lord give them timely repentance, and masters too, else their own and their servants sins will stand upon their score.

3. *He only lives up to the rule of his creation, who lives up to the will of God:* this is the royal standard, under which

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we all must march : This is the maine wheel, which must govern all our motions; Obedience to this, is that which denominates us both men and Christians; and as our duty obligeth us to obey the will of God in the grofs and general, so far as it is revealed : so our Allegiance to God, as men, and more as Christians, binds us to observe our particular calls and cries, as God revealeth things to be his minde and will; there are indeed standing commands which run through all ages of the world, without the least variation, & to obey which, all men, especially Christians, stand equally obliged. But the wise God is pleased to parcel out his will in particular commands to persons, as to time, manner and matter in many things, as his own counsels ripen, and bring forth his pleasure into the world; now a Christian must not onely observe the will of God, as it speaks to him in common with other men, but as it speaks unto him, and calls for something from him, in such a standing and capacity, and not onely observe the will of God which hath been owned in all ages (as the entertainment of his Son, sanctifying his Sabbaths, waiting upon his own appointments, &c.) But also to act up unto it in our respective stations, as he makes it known to us in the present providences and products of it : And therefore as a learned Writer lately observes, That God committed the receiving and refining of truth from Antichristian power and mixture, to the foregoing worthies of this and foraign Nations, which were happily performed by them, but discipline and order seem to belong unto us, and which, the Lord hath preserved for this period of time, wherein the work of reformation is to be carried on to greater perfection; this doubtless, the late providences speak to be the Lords will, and his expectation from the men of this generation; Oh then! ye servants of the Lord, whom he hath ransomed from the grave, in these late sickly times, live the rest of your time in the flesh to the will of God, in the advancement of Gospel-purity, and the power of godliness; let this be your return to the Lord; observe his finger pointing

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ting to this, as the especial work of your generation; and believe, that God hath brought you again from the dead, that ye may give life to reformation, national, at least Congregational; which for many years hath laboured under painful throes and pangs, and yet is not delivered, The Apostle Paul in that excellent Sermon of his preached at Antioch, *Act. 13. Speaking binorably of holy David*, verse 22. produceth letters testimonial under Gods own hand, concerning him in these words, *I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, who shall fulfill all my wills, whom I have chosen; and gives this further account of him, vers. 36. That after he had served his own generation by the will of God, he fell asleep. Whence I note, in general, that the best men and most eminent, both for parts, place, and piety must dye, *Jesh. 1. 2.* God tells *Josua* this news, *Moses my servant is dead*, what he was and how eminent, the spirit of God fully declares: *And David full of days, riches, and honor died*, *1 Chro. 29. 28.* And go therefore work whilst it is day, walk in the light whilst ye have the light, bestir your selves for God; for though eminent, dye ye must, as many of great eminency, in this age of ours have dyed, who are yet lamented by some now alive, and will be more, unless the Lord fill up their empty rooms with others, of choice and noble spirits.*

2. In particular, I shall briefly commend these few things unto you, as,

1. *That the best and choicest of Gods saints are not exempted from service; God expects to have work done by every servant;* he will not suffer idle drones to live in his family; he will not allow any lazy loiterers to sleep within the walls of his vineyard; he doth not keep any idle Serving-men in his house; no, he appoints them all to labour, (and 'twas well if the paterne of God's house was observed, if the Lawes of his family were executed by our Great Ones, much sin would be prevented, which is nursed at the breasts of idleness) nay, places of great eminency are no exemption from Gods work; *The nobles of Tekoa*

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have a brand set upon them, because they put not their necks to the work of the Lord, Neh. 3. ver. 5. And the Lord puts this as the highest mark of honour, into the scutcheons of his greatest Saints, that they were his servants: *Moses my servant, my servant David, &c. Matth. 25. ver. 20, 21. He that received five talents traded, and at the day of accounts, his labour was not only honourably accepted but gloriously rewarded, entrance was granted unto him, into his Masters joy.*

2. That Gods will is, and must be the only rule of our work; The Master expects, as to have his work done, so to have his own orders and directions observed in the doing of it; to neglect the work of the Lord, and to do it crookedly to vine order, is equally sinful: *Uzziah died upon the place for touching the Ark; and Uzziah was stricken with the leprosie, for attempting to burn incense upon the Altar of incense, both which expressly thwarted the appointment of God: It was the peoples sin to eat the Paschever, otherwise then it was writen, 2 Chron. 30. 18. Therefore David in the person of the Lord Jesus, joyns both together, Psal. 40. 8. I delight to do thy will, yea, thy law is in my heart; as the standard by which I work, and our Saviour writes vanity upon the forehead of all service, which is performed to God upon the single authority of man, without a warrant under Gods own hand for it, Mat. 15. 9. In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men: what bundles of vain worship are layed upon Gods Altar by the Pontificians? And how ought we to be humbled also for the vanity of many services which have been performed by us in this Nation?*

3. That the great God commands us not onely to work, but to do the work of our own Generation, David served out his own Generation, he did the work which was allotted by the Lord to him, in that particular age he lived in, which was to fight the Lords battels, to subdue the enemies of his Church, settle the Nation in peace, establish the worship of God, provide for the service of his Sanctuary, and prepare for the building of the temple; these were the works

works of his Generation, in those 2 capacities of Prophet and King; and therefore the holy Ghost engraves this Epitaph upon his sepulchre (which shall not be defaced so long as the world endures) *that David served his own generation by the will of God*: Instances of like nature the Scripture affords many.

Quest. But the great *Query* is, *How shall we know what are the proper works of our Generation.*

Ans. I answer much of this nature hath been offered by learned and judicious Divines in severall Treatises: and though they have not been so harmonious as was desired in their judgement, as to the manner, yet they have agreed in one as to the matter. Indeed repentance toward God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus with those generall duties of Religion, which are comprehended under these two heads, none deny or dispute, except some of prophane or perverted spirits and judgments; and that things of order and Government in the Church, should be reduced to the Primitive Pattern and Practice, few of sober and Orthodox principles do oppose; yea, most desire, and surely that this is the generation, which God hath called forth to act in these transactions, may bespell'd, if not legibly read in the dispensations of his providence towards us: I do not set up providence, as a standing rule to work and walk by, when it is either, cross'd unto or receives not approbation from the written word; for that was to perfwade the Traveller, to sleep all day when the sun shines bright and clear, and to take his journey in the night, when the starres do onely twinkle, and the wayes are dangerous and difficult to find; mistakes have been sad and many of this kind. *Numb. 14. ver. 40, 41.* the mistake of Gods minde in that dreadfull message, ver. 39. occasioned the slaughter of many men; for the people apprehending that God was offended with them, for not going up to take possession of Canaan, rose up early in the mornings and gat them up unto the top of the mountain, saying, *Lo, we be here, and will go up into the place, which the Lord* *hath*

bath promised, for we have sinned; and what followed? why, their attempting to invade their enemies, under this mistake, cost them many of their lives: This did *Saul* mistake the mind of the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 23. ver. 7. when it was told him that *David* was come to *Keilah*, presently he infers that *God* had delivered him into his hand, for sayes he, *he is shut in, by entring into a town that hath gates and bars,* but it proved otherwise: Yea, *Dauids* men would have put him upon the same mistake, chap. 24. ver. 4. when *Saul* came into the cave (to cover his feet) where *David* and his men lay hid, they presently conclude, *behold the day, of which the Lord hath said unto thee, behold I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayst do to him, as it shall seem good unto thee.* A like passage ye have chap. 26. ver. 8. when *David* and *Abishai* came into *Sauls* army by night, and found them all fast asleep, not a Sentinel waking, and *Saul* asleep also, *Abishai* said to *David*, *God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day, now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear unto the earth at once, and I will not smite him a second time; but David* durst not slay the Lords Anointed, under the protection and warrant of this providence, as the following verses declare, because it would have been an expresse violation of Gods will: Instances of this nature might be multiplied. But now when the speakings of God in his works, run in a paralell line with the speakings of God in his word, when they fall in with his revealed will, they do then safely interpret the mind of God, and are a good glosse upon the text, both as to the *quando* and *quando* of a duty, shewing that it ought to be done, and that then is the time for the doing of it: thus *Abraham* when he had received a prohibition from heaven, not to sacrifice *Isaac*, and beheld a ramme caught in a thicket by the horns, interprets the mind of God by that providence, and offers up the ramme in the stead of *Isaac*, Gen. 22. ver. 13. by a divine Prolepsis, anticipating that law of redemption, which afterwards was enacted and published by God himself, Exod. 13. ver. 13. *all the first born*

born of man amongst thy children shalt thou redeem: thus when the Lord met Moses by the way (as he was going down to Egypt) and would have slain him, *Exod. 4. ver. 14, 15* then Zipporah his wife (probably by her husbands appointment) circumcised her son, concluding the neglect of that duty to be the speakings of God in that providence, as appeared; for when the child was circumcised, the Lord let Moses go. When Gideon heard the Medianites dream, and the interpretation of it, *Judge 7. ver. 15* he worshipped and returned into the host of Israel, and said, *Arise, for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host*; He concludes this providence as a clear exposition of the mind of God: and a full confirmation of former promises. How did the Elders of the Jews, now being in Babylon, interpret the Lord's mind, in setting Cyrus the Persian upon the throne of Babylon, and stirring up his heart to publish that gracious edict, concerning their return to Jerusalem, and rebuilding of the temple? *Ex. 1. ver. 2, 3* why, they concluded, that God had now put an opportunity into their hands, both to quit the waters of Babylon, by which they had sate down and wept, and to enjoy the freedom of Gods worshups in their own land, *ver. 5*. Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the Priests and Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised to go up, to build the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem; they owned this providence as a true paraphrase upon that passage, *Psal. 102. ver. 13*. Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favour her: yea, the set time is come; being penned, as is thought by Daniel, or some other holy man, about this time of Cyrus's proclamation. Now to bring this home to ourselves, that the reformation of State-abuses, and mal-administrations, is the mind of God appears, *Isa. 1. ver. 17*. Cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherlesse, plead for the widow; that the worshups of God should be established in liberty and purity, that Gospel-truth should be winnowed from the chaffe of errors and heresies, that the people of God should

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should walk in the fellowship of the Gospel, and advance Religion, and the power of Godliness, the Scriptures plainly declare to be the will of God: that such things are feizable, that there is hope of a good issue in such undertakings we have the word of Gods faithfulness for, *Isa. 1. ver. 25, 26, 27. Isa. 60. ver. 11. 19, 20, 21, 22. Chap. 54. ver. 11, 12, 13. Zech. 13. ver. 2, 3, 4, 5. Ez. 36. 11. ver. 19, 20. Zeph. 3. ver. 9, 11, 12, 13.* If these and other Scriptures be consulted with, they will afford matter of great encouragement to the Saints of God, which breathe after Zion's beauty and glory.

And that it is a duty incumbent upon the Lords people to endeavour these things, besides the inward witness of the Spirit in their own hearts, we have the testimony of the Spirit in the Scripture of truth. And that this is the period of time, in the secret appointments of the only wise God, and the Saints of this generation, the people assigned by him for the carrying on of these works, may be read in the dispensations of God amongst and toward us; what have the people of God had more in former Ages, by way of call from God, or encouragement from men, then we have? Did God give them rest and peace from their enemies, forraign and domestick? So hath he given us in some measure: Did the Lord pull down those persons and powers amongst them, who authorised or abetted Idolatry and profaneness? hath he not done the same amongst us? Did the Lord give them the protection, and encouragement of prudent and pious governors? is it not so with us? had they the Prophets of the Lord to quicken them up, and strengthen their hands? have not we also Faithful and learned Ministers, who from press and pulpit call upon us, and excite us to do great things for the Lord? *Oh what glorious work, would these blessed Spirits, who are now at rest, have made in England, if they had enjoyed our opportunities!* Let me commend the practise of the Saints unto you, *Acts 9. v. 31. Then had the Churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee, and Samaria;* And how did they improve their Halcyon dayes?

dayes? why, they were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghost were multiplied; the superstructures were carried on, and new foundations laid; old converts arrived at greater growth, and new converts were daily added: Oh what a blessed peace would ours be, if these two fruits were the products of it! Oh ye servants of the Lord, whom he hath ransomed from the grave, and from the sword. Magistrates, Ministers, and Christians, lay aside your private interests, and animosities, and fall upon these great works, as your respective stations give you advantage, and opportunity, that ye may have this Motto engraven on your tombes, *Here lie such and such, who David-like, served their own generations by the will of God.*

And let me adde these two Corollaries,

1. That God hath assigned you your particular times for working, *Stat sua cuique dies.*
2. That when ye have lived up that time, your working tooles must then be laid aside: When David had served out his generation, he fell asleep: And therefore I shall shut up with the Preachers advice, *Ecc. 9. ver. 10. Whatsoever time hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whether thou goest; and though thou beest lately come from thence, be not secure, the winde may suddenly turn, and waite thee back again; Alas! What is your life? it is even a vapour, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away, Jam. 4. ver. 14. How easily can the great God disperse that vapour, and melt that cloud into dew? there is a great Arbitrer of all things, that can thunder the proud Emperour under his bed, and write the great King in three or four words into trembling; that can send a fly to fetch the triple crown before his Tribunal, make an hair, or the kernel of a ration, as mortal as Goliath's spear, that can unspeak the world into nothing, and blow down a great bubble with an easie breath: that by drawing one nail, can throw down the statelyest building, and undresse your*

O

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 Hicarié.

soules by unpinning one pin, &c. I have read of a Persian Noble-man who lost his life by the loss of an hair plucked out of his bosome, in sport, by his Minion.

5. *Get your hearts into an awful frame, get your spirits tuned with an holy fear of God, Rev. 15. vers. 4.* Surely they that have felt must needs fear him; they that have found the power of his anger, let out in soul terrors, yea in breaking afflictions upon the body, must needs fear him, though indeed none but the damned in Hell experience

Read
 M Jackson's
 Notes upon
 this place.

the power of his anger; *Moses in Psalm 90. ver. 11. put's the question, Who knoweth the power of thine anger? implying, that none knoweth it; as none can take the dimensions of his love which passeth all knowledge, so neither of his anger: the reason is added, because even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath; that is, let a man fear thee never so much, he is sure to feel thee much more, if he fall into thy hands; Paul knew this, when he laid down this Position (as a fence wall about Profession, to keep men from starting out by Apostacy) Heb. 10. vers. 31.*

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; surely if the burnt childe dread's the fire, much more men of age and discretion, who have been cast into the furnace of affliction, have had their moisture dried up, their skin withled, their flesh roasted, and their very bones burnt with the scorching flames thereof, have cause to fear that fire, which so farre resembles everlasting burning, that though it be not unquenchable, yet it is not quenchable, but by the blood of Christ, and the melting bowels of God's tender mercie: Oh then! Dear friends, take forth this lesson from your late afflictions, to fear that glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD, Deut. 28. vers. 58. Fear to offend God, fear to do any thing which may displease him; in this sense, Blessed is the man that feareth always, Prov. 28. ver. 14. The Hebrew Midwives lost nothing by it, Exod. 1. vers. 17. 21.

1. From the consideration of Gods power: he is able not onely to call you to an account, 1 Cor. 10. vers. 22. Do

Do we provoke the Lord to anger? Are we stronger than he? As Caligula, that dared his Jove to a duel; Are we the Lord's match? can we outstrengthen an Almighty God? Who hath hardened himself against him and profured? Job 9. ver. 4. Jer. 5. ver. 22.

2. Fear to offend him, from the consideration of his goodness; not onely that goodness which the Lord extends unto you in common with other men, nor that speciall goodness, which is the peculiar portion of his Elect in Christ, but also that particular goodness, which the Lord hath vouchsafed you, in restoring health unto you, when ye lay at the brinks of the grave, and many other tumbled in, *Hos. 3. ver. 5. Oh, Fear the Lord for his goodness.*

3. Fear an offended God, though not provoked by you: A tender spirited childe feares and trembles, when his father is angry with others, though himself hath done no fault; God likes this tenderness of spirit in his children, *Psal. 119. ver. 120. David saith, my flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments; my Samar. horripilation.* hair stands upright, as it doth sometimes in suddain and great frights, *Job 3. ver. 15. The hair of my flesh stood up; Amos 3. ver. 8. The Lion hath roared, Who will not fear? Oh observe this, Hab. 3. ver. 16. When I heard, my belly trembled, &c.*

Objection; But why should the Saints fear the wrath of God, who is in Covenant with them? and hath promised to be a covering Cherub unto them?

Solution 1. They see the provoking nature of sinne; they consider, that sinne is a thing of greatest abhorrency with God, and therefore when they observe the growth of sinne, in a place or nation, they are afraid, that God will ere long break out in wrath against them. Hence that *Numb. 17. 12, 13, read Ezek. 7. from vers. 1. to the 16. and apply it upon a national account.*

2. They see the dreadfulness of Gods wrath; they know the English of that, *Isa. 27. ver. 4. Who would set the briars and thornes in battell against me? I would go to-*

row them, I would burn them together: They know what briars and thornes are, and what their end shall be.

They see that themselves are not exempted persons, they are not sure to have their door-posts sprinkled with the blood of the Paschal lamb, *Exod.* 12. that the marking Angel *Exod.* 9. shall give them a signature of safety in their foreheads: How was the Church affected? *Acts* 5. ver. 11 *Ezek.* 14. ver. 14. Oh then labour to preserve an holy fear of God upon your spirits, think often of what Christ speaks, *Luke* 12. ver. 45. *Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have nothing they can do. But fear him who after he hath killed, hath power to throw into Hell; yea, I say unto you fear him.*

Lastly, Labour to make sure of heaven, lay out for an Interest in the Lord Jesus, let this be the teaching ye have received from the late sickness; Call to minde your sick-bed fears and tears; what pangs of conscience, and woundings of spirit ye then were under: what faintings of heart ye had, when you found your evidences for heaven writ with so pale a hand, that ye could not read them, at least by that weak and wan light, which then shined in your soules; what a loss ye were at for the Lord Jesus, weeping with Mary, because they had taken away your Lord, and ye knew not where they had laid him, nor how to lay hold on him for peace and pardon! nay, perhaps your cases were more desperate, your sins were writ in so deep a crimson, your Atheisme, ignorance, Gospel enmity, your former scoffings at Religion, your flouts and flings at godlines, your contempt of Gospel-Ordinances, and your rejection of Gospel-grace, did so fly in your faces, grate, and gnaw so upon your spirits, and filled you with such a sense of divine vengeance, that conscience (that bird in the bosome) like the night-raven croaked many a sad and dismal note unto you, and so presented you with the black side of the cloud, that ye verily thought, if ye should die at that lare, ye should drop into Hell: Remember what then your thoughts were, how then ye resolved,

ved, that if ye recovered health again, ye would not leave heaven under such uncertainties hereafter, ye would give diligence to make your calling and Election sure; ye would not for all the world be harassed again, with those dreadfull fears and terrours: like unto an unwary Traveller, who, to save a little mony, ventures upon the waldes without a guide, and suddainly lights upon a quick sand, which threatens to swallow up him and his horse, and whilest he is tugging and striving to get out, he lifts up his eyes, and sees the water appearing upon the level, and hears the tide roaring toward him; Oh what are his thoughts now! what his fears! sure that he shall die *Pharaoh's* death, and be overwhelmed with the sea, if timely help come not; and having by Providence had an escape, how doth he resolve never to travail that way without a guide, whatever it cost him, nor plunge himself again into the same fears, for his whole estate: Was not this your case? ye thought your sickness to have been but waldes, ye could easily have passed through it, but suddenly you slipped into a quicksand, such a deadly heart-sinking fit, that ye saw the grave opened, and the wrath of God rolling upon you; what were your thoughts then? what your fears? did ye not think your passing bell was ready to ring, and the prison-doors were opening to receive you? did ye not then resolve if your life was spared, ye would tuggle hard for Heaven? ye would never be at the same stay again? did ye not finde sickness an ill time, and a sick bed an ill place to take your first rise for heaven from? did ye not see your folly, to lay the greatest burthen upon your horse, when he was weak, and tired? to set out for heaven, when your sunne was now setting, when as it is an whole dayes journey thither, and he that begins late, usually fall's short of it? to carry the seed basket into the field, when your neighbours are crying harvest home? Oh then since the Lord hath restored health unto you, and brought you off from those heart-melting fears, ast up to the Apollites advice, *Phil. 2. vers. 12. Work out your salvation with fear* *and*

and trembling, *resqueſta, ad finem eſque opus perducit*, bring ſalvation-buſineſs to a good iſſue, that ye may never be ſurpriſed, with thoſe fears, and tremblings, when ſurpriſed with diſeaſes.

Second part
of Exhortation.

I come now to the ſecond part of the exhortation, applying this Doctrin of Gods appearances in mercy, and the Saints deliverances from danger, to the generality of men and women, who fear and know the Lord, and to believers, as they meet in Chriſt the common-head, and in the Church the common body, and I ſhall improve the truth propoſed,

1. In a mixt ſence, referring both to temporall and ſpirituall preſervations.
2. In a pure ſpiritual ſence, referring to recovering and Redeeming grace.

As to the firſt ſence, I ſhall interweave ſomething of a ſpiritual nature, it being uſual with the Holy Ghoſt, to mingle Goſpel treaſures with the lading of the world in the ſame bottome, and this I ſhall do in two particulars.

Fiſt, I do humbly entreat the ſervants of the Lord, *to keep up the memorial of the Lords mercies, to keep Diaries of their great deliverances*, to preſerve Records of their ſignall preſervations, And ſecondly, as occaſion ſerves, *to communicate and impart them to others*, for I ſhall twiſt theſe two together : Oh let not God loſe the glory of any mercy, let not time wear off the remembrance of eminent preſervations : God expects that his works ſhould be regiſtred by us, as well as our words are regiſtred by him, *Mal. 3. verſ. 16*. This was commanded by the Lord, *Deut. 7. verſ. 18, 19. David* was much in the practice of this duty, read *Pſal. 66. ver. 12, &c.* He gives a royal ſummons, as by the ſound of a trumpet, to all the Lords people to give their attendance; whileſt he diſcovereth over, the gracious Adminiſtrations of the Lord; he is no niggard, no cloſe-fitted Miſer, that hoards up all, and keeps all cloſe to himſelf, but keeps open houſe, and invites all the Lords people to his banquet of wine : He would

would fain lift up the great name of God in the world, and display his bounty, that they which have hard thoughts of God, may be convinced of their error, and make a recantation; and that all dejected Saints may by his example and experience, be encouraged to rouse themselves, upon God, under assurance of comfort and support in an evil day; which will appear to be his design, for, *ver. 5.* he gives a generall invitation to all people, *to see, and admire the wonders which were wrought by God* (is like) *in Egypt, he is terrible in his doings towards the children of men*; implying probably the dreadfull execution of his vengeance upon the Egyptians in those ten Plagues he sent amongst them, and in bringing in the waters of the red Sea upon their whole Host, as appears *Ver. 6. He turned the sea into dry land, they went through the flood on foot, to wit the children of Israel; there did we rejoice,* as *Exod. 15.* doth fully shew, when *Moses* and the people celebrated the praises of God, and by that song not onely kept up a lively fence of that glorious preservation in their own hearts, but transmitted the memorial of it unto posteritie, that the *children then unborn*, might read in that, the glorious appearances of God for his people: Oh how few such songs are penned in our dayes? what little care is taken to commemorate deliverances? though they have been so great and many: Is it not the shame of this Nation, that the next age shall finde no Records (and if any such Compendiums) of those wonderful deliverances, which we have had, that such miracles of mercy and mirours of loving-kindenes should be lap'd up in the dust, and printed onely on the sand? Oh that some faithfull and able person might be encouraged to this work, to write a Chronicle of late transactions, that posterity may see, what a God their Predecessours have had! and through how many straights of warre, and seas of blouds peace and the Gospel, light and liberty, have travailed down unto them! This was done by King *Abasuerus*; his personal preservation from the Treason of his two Chamberlains, was recorded in the

the book of the Chronicles, *Hest.6.2*. What provision did *Mordecai* and the Jews make, to keep up the memorial of that great mercy, in their deliverance from *Hamans* wicked and bloody conspiracy, *Hest.9.27,28*. *The inhabitants of Geneva, stamped new money with this inscription, post tenebras lux, after darkness light, in memory of the reformation begun among them. The Helvetians caused the day and year (when the Gospel begun to take place amongst them) to be engraven in a pillar, in letters of Gold, for a perpetual memory to all posterity.* Have not our Ancestors taken care to perpetuate the memorial of eighty eight, and the fifth of *November*? and shall we raise no monument, neither commit any thing to the press which may preserve the memory of our late mercies? will it not be *Englands* sin before God, and *Englands* shame before men?

2. In the eighth verse, he gives a general exhortation to the Redeemed of the Lord, to mention with thanksgiving, the great things wrought by a great God for them: Oh! bless our God, ye people (concerned in these mercies) let your hearts silently breath forth his praises; let your meditations be much, and often taken up with thoughts of Gods goodness (which is more I fear then most of us do) but stay not here, do not make this at the land-mark, and boundary of your duty, but make the voice of his praise to be heard, let it have an *Eccho* in the world, by communicating, and speaking over, what, and how deliverance came from the Lord unto you.

3. He layes down the reason of this call to praise, *vers.9.* because he holdeth our soul in life, or puts our souls into life, alas! when a day of distress was upon us, our hearts did even sink within us, life was gone, joy was gone, hope was gone, and heart was gone too in some persons. There is a strange recess and retirement of the soul, under great and sudden calamities, it lyeth close, like a poor debtor within doors, the blood and spirits retire; little of activity appears: nay, some in sudden surprisals, have even dyed away into swoonings through fear: It was thus with *Saul*, though a valiant Prince,

Prince, when he heard what evil was coming upon him,
1 Sam. 28. vers. 20. He fell straightway all along upon the earth, and there was no strength in him : And whence was this swooning fit ? why, from fear, he was sore afraid ; and why was he afraid ? because of the words of the Witches,
2 Sam. 28. 20. This was old Elies case, when tidings were brought unto him, that the Army of Israel was routed, Hophni and Phinehas slain, and the Ark of God taken, 1 Sam. 4. vers. 17, 18. He fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate; and his neck brake and he dy'd ; I, but here the Prophet saith, God holdeth our souls in life, or lives *Be-chaim*, and suffereth not our feet to be moved, gives us a sure foot-hold and safe standing in our present peace and well-fare.

4. He mentions the distress that were upon them, in the nature and in the kind of them, *vers. 10. 11. Thou, O God hast tryed us as silver is tryed :* How is that ? why, in the furnace of affliction ; thou broughtest us into the net, *Thou laydest affliction up n our loins, thou hast caus'd men to ride over our heads---we went through fire and through water;* How fully doth the carriages of former times paraphrase upon these verses ? How have the sufferings of many Saints ran parallel with these expressions ? *but thou broughtest us out into a weathy place---well-watered, as the word implies, a place of springs and rivers ;* by which he means a prosperous estate, in that full plenty and security, which he, with the Church then enjoyed : And therefore, *vers. 13, 14.* He speaks his sense of these mercies, and the resolvedness of his spirit, to act in thankfulness suitable to these engagements.

5. *I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings, and will pay thee my vows, which I promised with my lips, and spake with my mouth, when I was in trouble :* A good resolution of a gallant man ? Oh ! that such a spirit in the power of it, was upon us. Did not I ? Did not others ? Did not Magistrates ? Did not Ministers ? protect, promise, covenant, in the day of our distresses ? Have we paid our vows ? Have we performed our promises ? The Lord help us to see, and

the book of the Chronicles, *Hest.6.2*. What provision did *Mordecai* and the Jews make, to keep up the memorial of that great mercy, in their deliverance from *Hamans* wicked and bloody conspiracy, *Hest.9.27,28*. *The inhabitants of Geneva, stamped new money with this inscription, post tenebras lux, after darkness light, in memory of the reformation begun among them. The Helvetians caused the day and year (when the Gospel began to take place amongst them) to be engraven in a pillar, in letters of Gold, for a perpetual memory to all posterity.* Have not our Ancestors taken care to perpetuate the memorial of eighty eight, and the fifth of November? and shall we raise no monument, neither commit any thing to the press which may preserve the memory of our late mercies? will it not be *Englands* sin before God, and *Englands* shame before men?

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and to humble ourselves much before the Lord, for our violations of promises, and protestations, both to God and man.

6. He stands upon the mount of God, and by way of proclamation calls in all the people of God, that they may hear the stories of Gods mercies unto himself; when he had mentioned the great things God had done for his Church, he comes down to a particular narrative of what God had done for himself, *vers. 16. Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what God hath done for my soul--Le-mythesi*, which word being of a doubtful signification, and used for both soul and life, in reference to things of a temporal and spiritual concernment, we need not confine it to either.

1. Ye have the holy summons, *Come*, a word of much use both in a good and in a bad sense, there is in Scripture mentioned a religious *come*, and a rebellious *come*; the Saints have their *come*, and the wicked have their *come* there's too much of the last come in our days, and too little of the first, if there was more communion, this come would be more used.

2. The persons to whom the summon is directed, exprest.

1. By a particular Character, they are such as fear God.

2. By a note of universality, they are all that fear God; onely they that fear God, and all they that fear God are summoned.

3. Ye have the matter of the summons; or the end wherefore the summons is sent forth, and that is that he might in the audience of them all, make a full and true report of what the great God hath done for his soul.

So that the words hold forth a double duty.

1. To consider the mercies of God.

2. To communicate the mercies of God.

You may see from hence, *That it is a duty by way of special incumbency upon the Lords people, to commemorate themselves and to communicate to others, the vouchsafements of grace and mercy,*

*mercy, which they have had from the Lord; as to fix the sense and remembrance of mercies received upon their own hearts, so to give their hearts vent, like full vessels, in frequent mentioning their preservations unto others; it is a commendable practice, there is much of God in it; It hath the seal of the best men; it hath much in it, that speaks men to be good, and that makes good men much the better: See the practice of the Lords people, *Psa. 78. 3, 4. Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us, we will not hide them from their children, sleeping to the generation to come, or as some translation reads it, But to the generation to come, we will shew the praises of the Lord, his power also, and the wonderful works that he hath done: parallel to this is that, Isa. 63. 7. I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the promises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel: Memorare faciam, I will improve my care Azkjr. 2 Cor. 1. 8, 9, 10. We would not brethren have you ignorant of our trouble, which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure above our strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in our selves, that we should not trust in our selves; but in God, which raised the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us. What a history of his personal dangers and deliverances doth he make, 2 Cor. 11. 23. to the end: That to commemorate and communicate the mercies of God, is our duty appears, because it is of divine establishment; it is the appointment of God himself; he hath not left it Arbitrary, nor is it a meer humane constitution, but it is the institution of the great Law-giver, so that to fail in the duty is a transgression of his law, and fastens guilt upon the soul: And sure 'tis the Saints wisdom to take heed of sin, and to comply with the whole minde of God, *Deut. 32. 7. 8. 9.* observe also, *Psa. 78. 5, 6. He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded***

our fathers : Here is a law established , and a commandment given to enforce the observance of it : here's the people pointed out , upon whom the obligation of this law taketh hold , and here's the explanation of this law , what it imports , to wit , *That they should not bide , but sleep forth the wonderful works which the Lord hath done ;* and that no. onely to their brethren , whose lives might probably be finished as soon as theirs , and so the remembrance of those great things might dy also , but to their children , who according to the course of nature , might live to celebrate the memorial of them , when their carcasses were mouldred unto dust : As the great works of God , are not usually the work of one generation onely , but begun in one and compleated in another ; so God would not have them be the wonder of one generation onely , he would not have one age wear out the remembrance of those great deliverances , upon which he hath laid out so much of his wisdom , power , mercy , goodness , justice , &c. Therefore their children must know them , may the children which were yet unborn must hear of them , may it must not stay here , but even they must stand up and declare them to their children , and so a careful remembrance must be kept up of mercies , by a succession of ages , until time be swallowed up into eternity : much of the Passovers institution , had an eye to perpetuate the memory all of Israels *Exodus* out of Egypt ; so the golden pot of Manna , the twelve stones set up at the brink of *Jordan* , and many other things were the appointment of God , as standing records of some glorious mercy ; which fully speak forth the mind of God , that he would have his people , report his acts of kindness and good will unto them.

O then be exhorted to the practice of this duty ! the fruits it bringeth forth are very precious.

1. Fruit. *It will bring a Saint into more acquaintance with God* ; the soul hereby comes to a more experimental knowledge of God , when he beholds the banner of love displayed over him , and considers those precious attributes

butes of mercy, goodness, wisdom, and power, which were engaged for him, in the day of his distress : Oh ! this begets more heart-familiarity ; and makes a servant of the Lord more earnest in his enquiries after God : as it is among men, when a man is brought into great straits, either for estate or life, and a stranger takes pity on him, and through many difficulties, procures safety and deliverance for him. Oh how great a fence of this kindness will be upon the spirit of an ingenuous person : how will he be often speaking of it ! and the more he thinks and speaks of it, the more earnestly will he desire to know the man, that hath done such great things for him : Just so it will be with a good man when he hath been in a necessary condition, knew not what to do nor which way to turn him, *Refuge failed him, no man cared for his soul, he looked on his right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know him, as was Davids case, Psal. 142.* 4. Nay farther, his brethren were far from him, his acquaintance utterly estranged, his kinsfolks failed him, his familiar friends forgot him, his own servants counted him for a stranger, *Nay his breath was strange to his own wife, as was Jobs case, Job 19. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.* when a Saint hath been brought to these exigents, and then the Lord hath come in, brought him off with his own arm, hath brought salvation to him : Oh what a fence of mercy will this beget : How will a Saint awake his glory to speak of this ? How will he bewail his ignorance of God and follow on to know the Lord ? How will he press after a most inward acquaintance with the Lord, who hath done such great things for him ; when *Moses* was fled into *Midian*, and beheld the flaming bush on mount Horeb, *Exod. 3.* 3. He said, *I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt* : he contemplated the power and omniscience of God in it, and what farther meaning the Lord had in that great miracle, and when the Lord had spake with and commissioned him to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt, he enquires into the name of that God, who professes so far on the behalf of an afflicted people

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vers. 13. and would not sit down, untill God had told him that his name was, *I AM THAT I AM*, or I will be what I will be, *Ebeieb*, being the same with *Jah* and *Jehovah*, which imply,

First, Gods perfect, absolute and simple being in, and of himself.

Mr. Leigh. 2. Secondly, Such a being which giveth being unto other book of his things, and upon whom they depend.

Thirdly, Such a God as is true and constant in his promunity, *page* mises : ready to make good whatsoever he hath spoken, 133.

say, when *Moses* had been upon the mount with God forty days and forty nights, *And the Lord had spoke unto him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend*, Exod. 33. 11. yet having experienced so much the power and wisdom of God, and having brought forth the children of Israel, by so many signs and wonders out of Egypt, and all by the immediate commands, and communications of God himself; he could not rest in that knowledge of God he had already attained, but goes higher *vers. 18. And beseecheth God to shew him his glory*, he would not stay a little until he came to heaven, which could not be long, his glass being now almost run out, but he would have a full vision of God in all his glory here, he would know all, and a great deal more then frail man was capable to know, of that God from whom he and his people had received such glorious, such eminent deliverances : Otherwise if people did more observe, and count over the mercies of God, Personal and National, there would not be such a dolent ignorance of God as there is; God would not be such a stranger in our hearts, houses, towns and countries: Ah, how many houses may a man come into, nay how many towns may he rid through, and meet with very few, that know any thing of God to purpose, or that can give any considerable account of him, though his appearances of late have been so glorious amongst us: Oh that of Israel is sadly true of *England*, Isa. 1. 3. *The Or knoweth his owner; and the Ass his mangers crib; but Israel hath not known, my people hath not understood; The Lord* heal

heal this great ignorance, and pardon it, and quicken up all to keep up a sense of those great things God hath done for us.

2. Fruit. This frequent discoursing of mercies, healing, redeeming, quickning, and soul-converting mercies, &c. *will move endear God unto the Saints, it will unite the heart in to a more holy affection unto God,* Cant. 8. vers. 5. When the Church came out of the Wilderness leaning upon her Beloved; when Christ was with her in the Desert, and brought her forth from a wilderness, where she was at loss in her self, which way to go, and what to do how to get her wants supplied, how to have her life secured, how to get her feet directed, and how to free her self from those briars and thorns wherewith she was intangled, and Christ had then come in, had born her up upon everlasting Arms, and had brought her forth into the plain field; Oh, how is she affected with this! at what a pitch of love doth her spirit soar! how doth she press upon Christ! how would she get into the heart of Christ, and bring Christ into hers! vers. 6. *the puts up this request unto him, Set me as a seal upon thy heart, for love is strong as death, which conquers all men, jealousy is cruel as the grave, which spares none, and is never satisfied, the coals wherewith are coals of fire, which have a most vehement flame, many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it, if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it should be utterly contemned; What a Pyramid of love is here? What an unquenchable flame? What a pearl of great price is here? and what is the fuel of this great fire? What oyle doth kindle it? and what preserves it? Surely a strong and lively sense of Christs great affection to her, when in the wilderness: So, were our thoughts and discourings, more upon wilderness-grace, wilderness-conversions, wilderness-illighenings, wilderness-perservations and wilderness-deliverances, our hearts would be more heated with holy affections towards God, then they are: Oh sure! If there be any water at the bottom of the Well, this Bucket will draw it up, if any love in the heart*

heart, sense of mercies will bring it forth, and the more we discourse of mercies, the greater will be our sense of them.

Nay farther, a serious pondering of, and a favoury discoursing over mercies received, will bring forth a strong assistance in the people of God, it will marvelously scatter those fears, and desponding thoughts, which too often seize upon the best in a day of distress, and will excellently prevail with the heart, to bring it off from creature-things and seekings to stay upon God : *Tri-bulation worketh patience, and patience experience*, we should never so fully experience the power, providence, goodness and faithfulness of God, if we should always stay upon a quiet sea, if our estate was ever prosperous, if the scale of adversity were not sometimes the heavier ; but when we are cast upon rough and rocky seas, when we are brought into streights and know not what to do ; why then we see what a God can do ; what bowels, mercies, and tender-heartedness there is in a good God toward us : Alas men as men (and the best men are but men sometimes, and in some cases) are apt to fancy God to be like themselves, as straight-hearted and uncompassionate as themselves to persons in distress : but now, when an adverse condition hath put it to the trial, then they have found it otherwise, *That as high as the heaven is above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him*, Plal. 103, ver. 11. Nay as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are Gods ways of mercy to his afflicted ones, higher than mans ways : And his thoughts, thoughts of goodness and good will to his oppressed ones, above mans thoughts, *Isa. 55. ver. 9*. Now this experience worketh hope, hope of succour and relief from the Lord in an evil day ; this works an holy boldness in the Saints, makes them lift up their heads and hearts with comfort, and say, Supplies will come ; Deliverance will come, we will stand still, and wait for the salvation of our God. They rowl themselves upon God, when new troubles do arise, quiet their spirits with an expectancy of help from the Lord,

Lord, their sure friend, their tried friend, their good friend, and in an high way of believing speaks *Dauids* language, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, why art thou so disquieted within me, hope thou in God, for mercy will come, supplies will come, I have found the Lord to be a good God, a faithful friend that never failed me, a present help in the needful time of trouble. Indeed men may fail, as not being able to help, but God is Omnipotent, he can do abundantly above what we can ask or think, or men may fail, as being wearied out with often helping; I, but the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth faimeth not, neither is weary: Again, man may fail, as not knowing the fruits we are in, or how to bring us out; I but our heavenly Father knoweth the things we stand in need of, and how to deliver his out of every temptation: Lastly, man may fail, being changed in his affection unto us; I but there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning with God, he loves with an everlasting love: These Considerations do carry on the Saints with an holy triumph in their saddest pressures, and they say with *David, I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God, Psal. 43. vers. 5.* I might multiply Scripture preferences abundantly upon this head but that it is done already in another place: Oh friends, gather up your experiences, and lay them by you among your choicest treasures, you will finde them to be singularly useful to you in an evil time, and to others also, your experiences being faithfully reported to them, will comfort, quiet, and beget holy affiances in them, when they are brought into greatest straits, *Psal. 34. vers. 2. My soul shall make her boast of God, the humble shall hear thereof and be glad:* Rejoyce in tribulation: This was the end proposed by the onely wise God, *Psal. 78. vers. 7.* why his people should shew forth his marvellous works, namely, that their posterity might be taught that excellent lesson of living by faith, that they might set their hopes on God, that they might believingly expect help from a faithful, from an Almighty God.*

Fruit 4. A lively sense of mercy received, leads the soul on in Gods wayes, it is a notable friend to Religion, and

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provokes unto love and good works : That soul thrives best heaven-ward, which is most in the sense and serious meditation of the goodness of the Lord, this will carry on the soul amain for God : What a gracious frame was Jacob's spirit in, when he had the lively apprehensions of rich mercies, and great deliverances upon it, Gen.35. vers.2,3. *Jacob said unto his household, and all that were with him, put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments, and let us arise, and go to Bethel, and I will make there an Altar unto God; and why to Bethel? or why make an Altar unto God? Oh, there is good reason for it; He answered, me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went: There is very much in this passage, and much to the present purpose, and therefore I shall intreat your stay a while to observe the carriage of this good man, there being much teaching in it, and that in many particulars.*

1. Observe from hence, *That Family-reformation, lyes by way of special care and duty upon the Governour of it* : The Master of a Family is vested with authority from the Lord, to command the exercise of Religion in his own house : he may authoritatively act within his own precincts, and that for God : It will not answer the demands of God, nor satistie conscience, when awakened, that he hath walked in the ways of God himself, and kept up close, and closest communion with the Lord, if he voluntarily connive at the wickedness of his family, and leave them to their own carnal liberty in the things of God, he ought to put to his own hand, and move the wheels of Religion in his family, and command his household to fear the Lord : God himself gave this testimony of *Abraham* (whose children we are, if beleevers, and ought to walk in the footsteps of his faith) *I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, that they shall keep the way of the Lord, Gen.18. vers. 19. ut faciant*, that they shall do it, that they shall keep close to the way, and act up to the commands of God.

God. It is too much the fault of Family-governours, though good, to slacken their family care, in matters of Religion; the best are too remiss in this point, and if dealt withall, what is the answer of many? I hope my family walks orderly, I see no ill carriages among them I do not observe a spirit of opposition in any of them to the ways of God, I allow them not in any vicious course, they have no command nor countenance from me in any ways that are evil: This is something, and more than a great many can say, and speak in truth, but this comes short of the pattern here proposed; besides in matters that relate to your own interest, you will see them do your own business, you will often stand by them when they dress your horses (it may be when they feed your hawks and your hounds) ye will observe whether your worldly affairs prosper in their hands, ye will follow them into the fields and meadows, and see that your own work be done, and that seasonably and thoroughly; now why do you not see to the work of the Lord also? if a groom be wanting out of your stable, ye will misse him and ask for him, nay if he give you not a good account, ye will chide him or turn him away; but when do ye misse him at the worships of God? he may come late or not at all, to the publick ordinances or family duties, and hardly be milt, or if milt, get off upon easie terms; a soft reproof will serve the turn, like that of *Ely's* to his sons, *1 Sam. 2. 23, 24. Why do you such things? and do no more so*: Oh this is a National fault; and I fear, there is much wrath bound up in it: ye see another manner of spirit in *Abraham*, he commands both children and servants to keep the way of the Lord; I question not, but ye use the imperative mood in your own, and why not in the Lords work? Ye are good Gramarians for your own, and why not for the Lord's interest? *Meisters may in civility entreat and gently treat their servants, but if they refuse, and be stubborn, both the authority of a Master, and the duty of a Christian, obligeth them to command in the case of religion*; and if commands

prevail not, *David's* practice is a worthy pattern, *Psal.* 101. *ver.* 7. *He that worketh deceit shall not tarry in my house, be that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight : now to Jesu Christ God and their own souls is the greatest Mirrour, the highest peice of conseruage ; if they pack for any fraud, let them pack for that ; Surely, if they do not couzen you in temporalls, they make you go much to back-harrow in spirituals : they steal away much of your comfort, hinder much of that sweet communion, which ye and your family might keep up with God : if they do not set fire on your houses, they make the wrath of God impendent over them, for the curse of God (which is the most dreadfull scarefire) hangeth over the house where the swearer dwelleth ; and how few families can be found out wherein a swearer dwells not ? Oh that such a spirit of reformation, in the power of it, was upon all Governments of families, as was here upon *Jacob* ! Oh that they were men of resolution like unto *Joshua*, who resolutely concluded, though he stood alone, *I and my house will serve the Lord*, *Joshua* 24. *ver.* 15. Oh that they were men of religion, like unto *Cornelius*, who feared God, and all his house, *Act.* 10. *ver.* 2. I never hope to see religion flourish in the life and power of it, and spread it self over Towns, and Provinces, untill great men be good, and their families grow better : Oh how sadly can some villages witness, that popery and profanenesse have come down the hill from Lordship-houses, and spread like a contagious disease, almost over all the families : the Lord reform this.*

2. *It hath a great tendency to the promoting of religion, when master and family walk together to the house of the Lord* : when publick worshipps are frequented by the heads of families, and a due regard to Gospel-ordinances, be kept up by them, in the hearts of their whole retinue : Oh 'tis a light that heaven and earth rejoyce at, to see great persons march in good array to *Bethel*, in the very front of their families : It sadned *David's* spirit (when an exiled person) to remember how he had gone with his train

train to the house of God, Psal. 42. ver. 4. as the meeter gives it: and 'tis pressed by way of patheticall exhortation by the Apostle, *Heb. 10. ver. 25. upon believers, not to forsake the assembling themselves together, as ever they look for comfort at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ*, the time whereof draweth nigh; and to be gathered together unto him at his appearing, and in his kingdom: Ah, how little is that prophecy made good in our dayes, *Isa. 60. ver. 8. That people shall as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows*; where can ye find a town of which it may be affirmed parallel to that pattern, *2 Chron. 20. ver. 13. All Judah stood before the Lord with their little ones, their wives and their children*? I can sadly attest against this, and so can many others: Indeed, when this late reformation first began, Assemblies were numerous, Churches were thronged, Lectures much frequented; but now, *how do the prayers of Zion mourn, because few come to the solemn feasts*, Lam. 1. *ver. 4.* How thin are Sabbath congregations? and much thinner lecture-Assemblies! How hath *Saul* slain his thousands, and *David* his ten thousands! How hath Popery and profaneness weeded out many, and heresie more in our dayes: A third part almost in some places are carried off to by-meetings; well may the river below, when so many by-brooks carry away so much of the water: no marvel that so few answer to the muster-roll, when so many have lifted themselves under other Captains: Oh that God would bring back the people of this Nation, who have so much departed from the gates of wisdom: Oh that the Lord would magnifie his Gospel, and make it honourable amongst us in all its ordinances! And Oh that heads of families would be the Sermon bell in their own houses, and ring all their domesticks to Church with this peal, *arise, and let us go up to Bethel*! Heaven and God's wayes are up the hill; children and servants had need be handed up by their superiours, or else they will ly still at the foot of the hill, or else straggle into the vail of *Sodom*; how can we think the child should grow and battle, when it refuseth to take the breast? How can

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we expect that knowledge should encrease, at least savingly, when so many run to and fro, and few to the ordinances? may not the Governours of *Judab* find out some expedient, with safety of their own, and without any violence done to the consciences of other persons, whereby the ancient repute might be restored to the ordinances, and our assemblies might be filled? God grant they may: for *hinc ille lachrimæ*, both to me and others.

3. Observe, it administers great hope of much good, when *inferiurs obey their superiours commands, in their calls to religion and family-reformation*; there is a blessing: power goes along with the pious endeavours of prudent Governours, God very often, if not always appears, and adds authority to their commands, when their endeavours are serious and sincere to advance religion in their families: *Ie see here is a vote passed for God in a full house, Nemine contradicente*, a motion entertained by all *Jacob's* people; he did but propound a reformation, and they readily consented to it; the Text says, *Gen. 35. ver. 4. They gave unto Jacob all the strange Gods which were in their hands, to wit, in their possession, and all their earrings which were in their ears.*

Objection. But ye will say, *They were Hebrews, trained up in the fear and knowledge of the true God, and possibly, extraordinarily principled, and moved at that time by an immediate impulse of the spirit of God, it is not so with our Families.*

Solution. I Answer, It is sadly to be lamented, that any of this Nation, grown up to years of maturity, and in a rational way capable of teaching, should be so ignorant and ill-principled, as to oppose their Governours call, and not submit to their commands, when they command for God, and call to those ways, which being walked in, lead to eternal blessedness; and that considering what advantages this Nation hath, yea of ancient times hath had, in the light and Liberty of the Gospel; this Nation being the first in all the world that embraced the first Christi-Gospel, by the authority of the supream Magistrate, an King: nat even by King *Lucius*, about 170 years after Christ: Indeed

deed the Gospel was preached to other Nations before, overruigned and many Churches were gathered out of many Pagan in the world, Cities and Nations, when the Governours were Idolaters, which was and onely tolerated the Gospel in their Dominions; but *Lucius*. here the chief Authority of the Nation was for the Gospel; *Speed* in his established the Profession of it by a civil Sanction, *yea*, Chap. 9. made a Law, that the Gospel should be owned and professed. *Sub* Lucio fed all the Nation over : and now, that the Gospel should *Britania* have been in the Nation, for almost 1500 years, (for certainly it was never quite extinct in the darkeſt times, *Provincia* there was ſome glimmerings of light in the moſt gloomieſt *rum prima* day) and yet, that ignorance and Atheiſme ſhould ſo generally prevail, is very ſad, yet ſadly true : But where lies *Chriſti no-* the blame of this ? much at the doors of parents, and *men recipit*. Matters of Families, want of Education, and of early ſea- *Anton. Sub.* ſoning of children, both at home and at School, is much *lib. 5. Eu-* the cauſe of that groſs ignorance, and generally profane- *ned 7.* neſs, which overſpreadeth the Nation : And truly, Mi- niſters remitting their care and pains in catechiſing, is not the leaſt cauſe of theſe forenamed evils : Oh that the ſence and experience of theſe things would awaken parents to a more carefull education of their children, and that the Magiſtrates care might be, to ſet up, and encourage ſchools of learning in every Town, that is with conſiderable for number of Inhabitants, at leaſt, ſuch as by the Schooles, wherein the children of the poor might with- out charge to them, be inſtructed in Scripture-Learning, and the Principles of Religion : How are the Proteſtants of the Valleys farre above us in this point ? The children of *Merindol* propounded and answered queſtions amongſt themſelves, in the audience of the Biſhop of *Cavaillon*, *Att. and* and many others, with ſuch grace and gravity, and ſo *Monn. pag.* to the purpoſe, that the Papiſts admired at it, nay, one 195. of their adverſaries proteſted, that he had been often at King *Hen. 8.* the common Schools at *Sorbone* in *Paris*, where he heard the diſputations of the Divines, but yet he never learned ſo much, as he had done by hearing thoſe children : O that ſome good *Nebenmiſts* would promote this work, of encour-

encouraging Schools throughout the Nation, and that the Ministers would own it more as their business, to instruct children and younger people in Catechistical points; and that an Act might be brought forth, enjoying under penalties, Parents and Masters, to bring forth their children and servants to a publick catechising; for without this, little good will be done in many places, as some Ministers can speak by sad experience, being forced to lay that necessary work down, because no law of man enjoined, neither would Governours of Families command their young people to attend upon it; and hence it hath been, that the children of Christians (as to the general Profession) have, like the children of the Jews, *Neb. 13. ver. 24. spoke half in the speech of Ashdod Heathen-like, and could not speak in the Jews Language*; to wit, the pure Idiom of the Gospel. But suppose your servants be bad enough, (as I believe too many be,) yet it will be more your honour to square a knotie peice of timber, and polish a churlish stone; when ye smooth a rugged spirit, and make that pleyable to the ways of God, it will more redound to your comfort: And consider, ye plough in hope, and have a bottome from *Jacob's* success, for hope to rest upon, for he not onely commanded his household, to wit, children and menial servants, but also all that were with him, some of whom probably came out of *Mesopotamia* with him, and many of those *Shechemites* also, that were lately taken captive by his sonnes, were in company with him, yet his command was given unto all, and all submitted unto it, for as well the strangers that were with him, as his own household, gave unto him all the strange Gods, which were in their hands; they freely yielded up all their Idols, into the hand and power of *Jacob* their Governour, never to see them more, nor worship them more; And the text sayes, *Jacob hid them*, (tis like, without their privacy) *under an oak which was by Shechem*; now then take pattern from hence, and set up in your families unto it: How know you but the power of the mighty God

God, may so awe the spirits of your servants, that the most rugged and rebellious among them, may stoop under your reproof? How know ye, but that they may deliver up their pride, oaths, drunkenness, wilfull ignorance, and Gospel enmitie into your hands? if in the name of the eternal God, as Christian Governours, ye demand them? And what a noble conquest would that be? What a quieting consideration will this be to you at a dying hour?

4. Observe further, *That great deliverances, lay great obligations upon Governours, to a^u high in personal and family Reformation*: If ye say, here's a great deal more urged then needs, why did *Jacob* do this? and why must we do this? the enforcement is laid down by *Jacob*, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way that I went; as if he had said, I cannot discharge my self of that debt I owe unto-God, nor render my self a person in any measure, worthy of his mercies, if I should tolerate such principles and practises in my house, which are dishonourable unto him, and destructive to the very interest of Religion: Oh! I will remember the day of distress, which was upon me, when my brother *Esau* threatened my life, for the birthright and blessing which I obtained from him: I well remember mine afflicted estate, when I was in the day time consumed with drought, and in the night by frost, and my sleep departed from mine eyes, whilst I served a churlish *Laban*, and had my wages changed ten times by him: I remember those tears, yea great tears which seized upon me, when *Esau* came against me with four hundred men at his heels, at verbs taken which time I wrestled with the Angel, and spake before from killing the Lord that I feared greatly, *least Esau would come and the bird upon me, and the mother with her children, or Gbmal-Bunim—* on the next upon her children, heaps upon heaps: And now, seeing with her God was with me, and answered me in all these dayes of young ones, my distress, and hath brought me off in a wonderful *Hof. 10. 14.*

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way of mercy, with safetie to my life, and security to my
 estate, I dare not fail in this great duty of family-Refor-
 mation, I cannot bear any longer the dishonours which
 are done to God in my Family, nor quit my spirit any
 longer with my personall Religion, and therefore I lay
 it upon you all by way of command, as a Magistrate in
 my own family, *that ye put away the strange Gods which
 are among you, and be clean, and change your garments,
 and let us arise, and go up to Beth-el: Thus David 2 Sam.
 vers. 1, 2. When the Lord had given him rest round about,
 from all his enemies: The fence thereof was so lively
 upon his spirit, that he suddenly and seriously resolved, to
 build an house to the Lord, and establish the worship of God
 in the Land, to which he was encouraged by Nathan the
 Prophet at first, but afterward received a flat prohibition,
 that he should not build it; yet see how the fence of
 mercies carried him out, to prepare abundantly for that
 magnificent building, charging, and encouraging Solomon
 to the work, and quickening up his Princes unto free-will
 offerings, 1 Chron. 28. ver. 20. and Chap. 29. vers. 1, 2. and
 so forward: Oh then! I make it my humble request, to
 all that read this passage, that ye would improve mer-
 cies received, and deliverances received, according to
Jacob's pattern, that it may quicken you up to family
 care, to set up Religion in your Families, and promote it
 in the Nation, *that the Lord may feed you with the heritage of
 Jacob your father, Isa. 58. ver. ult.* Think often and seri-
 ously, what your Dangers and what your Deliverances
 have been: and surely, if there be any heat and life
 in the soul for God, this will bring it forth, there would
 not be that heart-deadness, neglect of Family-discipline,
 and that Formality, even amongst Professours and Chri-
 stians of long standing; they would not sit down in such
 a lazie Profession, and tolerate that Ignorance, that
 profaneness, and those abuses, in their Families, and
 Towns, if they were thoroughly awakened by a due col-
 lection, and serious communication of experienced
 mercies, how often and how signal their deliverances
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have been from the jaws of death : Oh receive in love this word of exhortation from an unworthy hand, and the Lord set it home upon your hearts.

2. I come now to the pure spiritual part of the exhortation : Are the appearances of the Lord eminent and immediate for the help of his people in their greatest straits? have you experienced this? can you set your seal to this truth? hath the Lord engaged for your help, and brought you off with safety and comfort, when you were under the greatest hazards? then make a good use of such mercies, and takemy advice in these following particulars.

1. *Make a serious and speedy enquiry, whether you are brought of from sin and wrath by Jesus Christ, and what have been the methods of God toward you in your spiritual deliverance.*

2. *Quicken up your selves to duty, in all your deadness and damps of spirit.*

3. *Be much in the sense and meditation of grace received, keep up the consideration thereof.* To the first,

Improve your temporal preservations, by way of inquiry after your spiritual safety : whether the Lord who hath made bare his Arm in signal deliverances for the life of your bodies, hath also stretched forth the right arm of grace for the life of your souls, and how the Lord hath methodized the ways of his grace unto you ; make these two particulars the matter of your great enquiry.

1. Put this question unto your souls, and be serious in it, as a matter of most concerning and everlasting import : I shall speak now to single persons, and therefore shall direct the enquiry to the Reader, as though he was that very person I wrote this unto, and for : Say to thy soul, Man, The Lord hath often fetcht me off from temporal dangers, But O hath the Lord wrought *that great deliverance for my soul?* Am I brought off from a state of nature *by renewing grace?* Am I delivered from the bondage of sin and corruption *by redeeming grace?* Am I brought back from spiritual Babylon *by restoring grace?* Am

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I I ransomed from under the power of Satan by victorious grace? God hath given me life from the dead for my body, but have I life from the dead for my soul also? Oh! what will all these temporal deliverances avail me, if I have not *deliverance from wrath to come by Jesus Christ?* What advantage will it be unto me, that I have often been kept out of the grave, if when I dye I drop into hell? What comfort will it be to me at a dying hour, that God hath saved me out of six troubles, yea out of seven, if I shall then have no assurance of eternal salvation, but rather perplexing fears of perishing everlastingly? what was it for *them* to be preserved in the Ark, when an overflowing deluge swallowed up the whole world of the ungodly, seeing afterward he lived and dyed and lay under the curse of God to eternity? or for rebellious Israel to be brought by so many miracles out of Egypt, and yet entered not, *through unbelief into the land of rest?* Do not therefore hastily conclude from thy temporal salvations, that thou shalt be eternally saved, for that is untrue, but rather take occasion from thy temporal, to enquire into thy everlasting safety: let this put thee upon a strict and narrow scrutiny: The Apostle urgeth this, *2Cor.13.5. Examine your own selves, whether you be in the faith, prove your selves, know ye not your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you except you be reprobates.* The first word in the proper signification implies a piercing through timber, that trial may be made, what it is within, whether found or rotten; or the piercing of a vessel, that the Vintner may taste the wine and try the goodness of it; thus Christians must pierce through and through their hearts that they may know the soundness of them: *Men have a plausible profession yet but rotten hearts;* men may think their estate to be very good, when it is starke naught, and conclude they are brought over to God, when they are fill in the devils quarters; therefore the Apostles advice is to try and to do it exactly: The devil is called *the tempter*, because he goes through stich with his work, and tryes to purpose, he perforates and pierceth through the heart, and

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and if there be any unmortified corruption or unsoundness there, he will be sure to finde it out : nay, as though one word was not enough in a busines of so great import, the Apostle adds, prove, which refers to that trial which Goldsmiths make of their mettall, that they may not put a cheat upon themselves : And here the exhortation is doubled, that the duty might be more enforced, as being a most needful, but a much neglected duty : Hence as *Zeph. 2.*

δοκιμαζει.

1. *The Prophets says, Excusite vos, iterumque excusite vos, Fan your selves, yea fan your selves:* so the Apostle doubles his

charge, *Examine your selves, yea prove your selves*, as if he had said, make it much the matter of your enquiry whether

ye be in the faith, whether Jesus Christ be in you, otherwise

ye notwithstanding all your gilded profession, and form

of godlines, ye will belaid aside as counterfeit coin, yea

cast of : as reprobate silver at the great day of tryal ;

when the Lord will bring to light the hidden things of

darkness, and make manifest the counsels of all hearts,

1 *Cor. 4. 5.* and though your deliverances have been never

so remarkable, your preservations never so admirable as

to thy temporal safety ; yet thou wilt be a *cast-away* and

perish everlastingly, if thou be not in the faith, & Christ be

not in thee : Oh then enquire into thy spiritual estate,

and labor to evidence the truth and life of grace in thy

soul, that as thou knowest and ownest deliverances from

such and such dangers, so thou mayest with safety con-

clude thy *deliverance from wrath to come by Jesus Christ* :

this will sweeten all the providences of God unto thee, this

will make the remembrance of forepast deliverances, pleasant

unto thee, *Nam. 13. 23.* and will be *as the grapes of*

Escol, upon which thy soul will feed with delight ; as

Mat. 26. 29. having some relish of that wine, which thou

shalt drink new to eternity with Jesus Christ in the Kingdom

of his Father : But when thou speakest or meditatest

how, and how often, and in what cases of imminent danger,

the Lord hath preserved thee, and then for want of

a thorough tryal of thy spiritual estate, thou beest in

doubt, what will become of thee to eternity, then to say,

dubius

*dubius morior, & quo vadam, nescio, I dye doubtfully not knowing in which of the two places, Heaven or Hell, I shall spend eternity: Oh, this will be sad, this sting of death will wound very sorely: but more sad and dreadful will it be unto thee, if thy fears be great (and nothing from within to check them) that thou art reserved to the day of judgement to be punished, or kept in store unto the day of perdition of ungodly men: Oh this will like a bunch of wormwood in wine, embitter all thy preservations: be much and serious in this great business, and if upon day of trial, thou findest the witness within, and hearest the bird in thy bosom singing sweetly: Be much in admiring the riches of free-grace, not onely that thy name is not blotted out upon earth, but that it is writ in heaven; onely that thou hast been preserved from the uppermost hell, but that thou art preserved to the heavenly Kingdom: if the scales hang even, or thy fear outweighs thy faith, give diligence to make thy calling & election sure, and the rather because thou hast tasted so much of the mercy and goodness of God, in bringing thee to safe harbor from many stormes; This will make thy entrance more abundantly glorious, into the everlasting Kingdom of thy dear redeemer; when thou canst sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb together; this will make melody in thy heart indeed: But if thou beest in a state of Atheism and open prophaneity, or notwithstanding thy carnal Gospeling or formal profession thy heart smites thee, thy conscience condemns thee, and thy daily practice bears witness against thee, and all together tell thee to thy face, that thou art not in a state of grace, thou art not interested in the blood of Jesus, and that *Christ is not, in thee the hope of glory*: Oh let these thoughts be often upon thy heart: I have been sometimes, in a way of mercy saved from drowning in the water! Ah, but what will this avail me, If my foolish and burtsul lusts do after drown me in destruction and perdition? I have been by a hand of mercy plucked out of Sodom's burnings; but ah! what comfort will this administer, if I be cast into everlasting burnings?*

1 Tim. 6. 9. *desire of riches is a root of all evil, which some pursuing have lost sight of the Lord, and have fallen away from the faith, and have brought many sorrows upon themselves, and upon their families, and upon their kindred, and upon their neighbors, and upon their country, and upon the world.*

I have been fetcht by a signal mercy from a deep and dark dungeon : but ah ! what will this advantage me , *If I be thrown into the bottomless pit ?* I have been antidoted from the raging pestilence ; but ah ! How can I rejoice in that , *If the plague of my heart be not cured , and the second death have power over me ?* what contentment can I take in all my former deliverances , *If I be delivered up to eternal wrath ?* Let such thoughts prevail with thee , and improve thy present deliverances , as warnings and awakenings from the Lord , to provide for thy eternal safety : The Lord Jesus preached very often upon this subject , to those that he cured , *Behold thou art made whole , in no more , least a worse thing happen unto thee ;* Oh the worm that never dyeth , and the fire that never goeth out , will be far worse , then all the miseries that thou hast suffered here : this is much the sin of many , they do not heed the outgoings of God ; nor consider the hand of the Lord that hath been upon them , or for them in a day of distress ; the fence of great deliverances soon wear off , and so the fruit of all is lost : but if men would often say , had not the Lord helped us , the sea had swallowed us up , and if we go on in these courses , it will not be long before hell swallow us up ; had not the Lord procured my enlargement , I had rotted in a noisom prison , and if I walk on in these ways of sin , I shall be certainly thrown into that prison , out of which I shall not come , untill I have paid the utmost farthing : certainly if such considerations were more upon our spirits , there would not be that Atheism , dissoluteness , and profaneness amongst the world , nor that luke-warmness , formality , and deadness of spirit amongst the best , as there is : Sabbaths would be more duly observed , ordinances more carefully attended on ; the season of grace more prized , the messengers of grace more honoured , the ways of grace more walked in , and men would minde the great business of salvation in more good earnest , then the most men do ; Oh then try this course , and improve this counsel , least after all thy temporal deliverances , eternal wrath may be thy portion.

2. If

2. If upon due tryal thou findest a work of grace wrought in thy soul, *Christ formed in thy heart* ; put it to the question, how, and when was this good work begun in my soul ? in temporal dangers and deliverances men are apt to speak, what hazards of life they have been in, what days of distress have been upon them, and aggravate all by relating the circumstances of time, place, company, &c. and then, how and by what means the Lord brought them off, above and beyond expectation, when they least looked for it, and had least ground to hope after it: Oh what stories will some men tell of this nature! how will they delight in it, and account it their honor to do it ? O follow then this pattern in a spiritual way; discourse over and often the passages of Gods mercy and thine own misery ; what thou wast, how vain, how ignorant ? what, an enemy to God ? what a hater of good men ? what a despiser of the means of grace, and how regardless of thine own eternal peace and welfare ? so that if the twine thread of thy life had been cut, when thou wast in that estate, thou hadst certainly dropt into hell, and perished without all hope of recovery ; and that then, when no eye pittied thee, nor thou thy self, when thou didst not look after Christ, but braved it out against God, and all Gospel tenders ; then, even then the Lord came in graciously and seasonably unto thee, *And according to his mercy saved thee, by the washing of regeneration, and renewings of the holy Ghost, which he shed on thee abundantly by Jesus Christ thy Saviour : Saint Paul was much in the review of what he had been and done ; and in owning and admiring free grace : He is not ashamed to tell the world, what he was before conversion ; when and how the Lord came upon him, and wrought that blessed change in him : And indeed some ancient Christians tread in the Apostles steps and still retain this practice, sure'twas well, if it was more done, provided it was well done, not out of pride and vain glory, but in humility and lowliness of minde, that God alone may be acknowledged and adored for his rich grace ; and others may*

may reap fruit by it to their comfort, establishment and support; but I do not lay this down as the general duty of all under profession; I know there be some who play the hypocrites in Religion, and these (out of meer pride and ostentation, that they might get a name and repute among believers, and be counted somebody) would be forward enough in this work (speaking lies in hypocrisy, and pretending to great things, which they never experienced; like that Amalekite, 2 Sam. 1. 6, 7, 8, 9. who told David a fair tale, how he stood upon Saul and slew him, and took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was upon his arm, &c. and all this that he might win credit with David, and gain his favour by slaying his enemy, who stood betwixt him and the crown: when as the whole story was false; this would be the case of some false-hearted hypocrites. Again, some of the servants of the Lord who are real converts, would be at a loss within themselves, not being able to give an account, when and how the Lord first wrought upon them; who can onely say with the blind man, *Job. 9. 25. This one thing I know, that whereas I was born blind, I now do see*: the work of grace upon the hearts of some, as to the *quando* and *quomodo* time and manner, is undiscernable by them: The Lord spiritualizeth their morals, sanctifies their principles of education, and drops down his spirit upon the seed, and his blessing upon the off-spring; so that they spring up as among the grass (as Spring Flowers, which ly buried under ground the Winter season, and sprout forth as the year ariseth) *Isa. 44. 3, 4.* To this the Lord Jesus speaketh, *Mark. 4. 26, 27. So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground and should sleep, and the seed grows up he knows not how*: God sows the seed by the hand of a godly Parent or Pastor, and in due season, when and how they know not (neither Parent, Pastor, nor the Person himself) it bringeth forth fruit! the word works sometimes many years after, as they say of the Elephant, that she brings not forth till the thirteenth year after she hath conceived: The first springs in the womb of grace

are precious, and carefully preserved by the spirit, and when they put forth, it may be without any noise: *For the Kingdom of heaven doth not always come with observation: This Timothy knew the holy Scriptures from a child,* 2 Tim. 3.15: not onely the bare letter and form of words, that but little; but knew them so as to love them, to read them with delight, and look for salvation: wisdom in them, *through faith which is in Christ Jesus*; and probably by the care of his grandmother *Lois* and his mother *Eunice*: sure, gracious parents, and godly education do contribute much (though not infallibly) to the seasoning of tender years, and it was well if parents would make it much their care (as blessed be God some do) to furnish their children, whilest children, with Gospel-knowledge. It is reported, *That the Lady Wheatenhall, Mr. Trap, in so plyed her young Niece Mistress Elizabeth Wheatenhall,*

2 Tim. 3.15. *that before she was nine years old, she could say the New Testament by heart, and was able to name the book, and chapter where any word or passage was*: A singular president, worthy of admiration: Oh that Christian parents would take this hint: *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul,* Psal. 19.7. That the genuine and native fruit of it; at least through the blessing power of the spirit, conversion is in it, and from it; and who knows, whether the word, being engrafted by godly parents, may not bring forth early conversion in their children? Sure we are, there have been and are young Saints in the world, who have relished the ways of God and walked in them, before they have travailed many years journey from their mothers wombs; now to these I do not direct this particular advice, but to those whose conversion hath been visible, their change so signal, that the whole Town, ye Country hath rang of it; some such there are, who are able to say, that at such a time, under such means, by such a word, in such a way, the Lord was pleased first to work upon them; they can circumstantiate their conversion in all the occurrences of it: *Paul* could tell the errand he went upon (which was bad enough) the company with whom,

whom, the time of the day, the manner how, and the place of ground (as it were) upon which he fell, when the Lord fell in with him by converting grace, as he discoursed at large, *Act. 22. 6, 7, 8.* compared with *Chap. 26. 12, 13, &c.* Now then, to such in a more peculiar manner, I speak, as thou dost observe and discourse over the passages of Gods providence toward thee, in helping thee out of great straits, and tellest thy friends what they were and how nigh unto death thou wast, and how the Lord came in at such a time, in such a manner, and by such means, and brought thee off with safety: so be much in observing and shewing forth, what God hath done for thy soul; what providential passages were antecedent to thy conversion; what awakening, teaching, and leading providences were in order to thy conversion; whether God did not first awaken thee by such an affliction; give a check to thy spirit in the high careers of sin, by such an humbling providence; or made way for the entertainment of Christ and Gospel, by disappointing thee in such a worldly design; or won upon thee by some notable deliverance, as was the sailors case, *Act. 16. 28.* or how the Lord was pleased to bring thee into such a family, or into acquaintance with such godly Christians, or under such a powerful and soul-searching Ministry; these all through grace, have had a sub-fervency to the great end of God, in bringing sinners home unto him. Then again, consider those ways of God, which were concomitant, and as means, were instrumental to thy conversion; in what method the Lord was pleased first to work upon thee; what measure of the spirit of bondage to fear, thou wast under; what sin thou wast first convinced of; how long thou wast under conviction, before conversion was brought forth in the fruits and evidences of it; what lust the spirit first struck down in thy flesh; what repentance and godly sorrow for sin was wrought in thee; what attempts the devil made upon thee; how forceable they were, and with what success; and how long thou didst lie under the fence of sin and wrath, before thou hadst

any quieting apprehensions of pardon and accepting grace through the blood of Jesus; let these and things of like nature be observed by thee, and reports thereof seasonably made to others. Nay, Lastly take notice of the after-visits of the spirit of God and grace to thy soul; what sweet and suitable returns the Lord gave thee in thy prayers: what seasonable succours thou receivedst in an hour of temptation; what power from the spirit of holiness came in, in thy contending with some Lady-lust; what measure of consolation was cast in after thy days of mourning; how far thou hast been sealed with the holy spirit of promise, and hast taken earnest of thine inheritance, since thou didst believe: Oh be much and with much seriousness in all these particulars; make a due collection of all, and as thou carefully observe the great deliverances, which God hath wrought for thee, upon a temporal score; so much more read over and ruminate upon that great redemption from wrath and condemnation: and say with the Psalmist, when invited to it by a seasonable opportunity, *Psal. 66. 16. Come and bear all ye that fear the Lord and I will tell you, what God hath done for my soul*, of which this treatise will give thee a further account, with directions for the managing of it, and the benefits which redound from it.

2. *Q.icken up your selves unto duty in all your hard-heartedness and damps of soul*; the best trees are subject unto moss, which stunts them in their growth, and that stints them in their fruitfulness: so the best Saints are liable to deadness of heart, and damps of zeal, the love of the world, like moss over-grows them; or else there is some worm of pride, security, self-confidence, &c. at the root, which drinks up the sap of life, and blatteth the fruits of of faith and holiness: *O how have I seen some fruitful Christians, grow as the lily, cast forth their roots as Lebanon, spread their branches and beauty as the Olive-tree, and their sent as Lebanon*, Hof. 14. ver. 5, 6. which afterwards have been dwarfed in their growth, dwindled in their fruit, and decayed in their sent? How was it with the Church,

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Can. 2. ver. 3, 4, 5. Like the apple tree among the trees of the forreſt, ſo is my well beloved among the ſons of men; I ſate down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet unto my taſte! At what a rate, in this verſe, and ſome following verſes, doth ſhe ſpeak forth the praiſes, and preciousneſſe of the Lord Jeſus, expreſſing her delight, complacency and acquieſcence in him, and the ardency and ſtrength of her holy affections towards him; again, chap. 3. ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. How earnestly and inſtantly did ſhe ſeek the Lord Jeſus in his with-drawings from her? How haſtily did ſhe get out of her bed, and trudge to Jeruſalem, where the Temple, Prieſts and ordinances were to find her beloved Jeſus? and how did ſhe lay hold upon him, and cling unto him, claſp him with the embraces of faith and love, and would not part with him, untill ſhe had her deſires fulfilled? like *Jacob*, Gen. 32. ver. 26. nay Chap. 4. ver. 16. How fervently doth ſhe pray for the graces and in-breathings of the ſpirit, and invite her beloved to come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruit, and yet what an unhandſome return. and how inevitable to all thoſe affectionate pangs, did the Lord Jeſus receive from her? Chap. 5. ver. 3. Chriſt gives her a viſit, and calls to her, to open the door and entertain him; and ſhe from within replies, *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I diſſe them?* what a pitiſull answer is here? and what poor reaſons are here produced? I have put off my coat, like that, *Luke 11. ver. 7. Trouble me not, the door is now ſhut, and my children are with me in bed, I cannot riſe*: A great buſineſſe ſure to have riſen a little from his children and opened the door to relieve the want of a neighbour: the ſeſh is wayward as well as weak. I cannot, ſayes he, how can I? faith ſhe, well enough: ſhe was paſt a child; and not yet grown ſo decrepid with old age, but ſhe could make her ſelf ready, at leaſt ſhe might have ſlipt on her morning coat, and ſtept to the door without any danger of taking cold, but ſin and ſhifiting came into the world together, as one obſerveth; and the brats of our own be-
getting,

getting, are always with us in the bed of carnall security and flesh-pleasing: yet let us a little plead the Churches cause and advocate for her to take off the rigour of the charge: It may be she was asleep, and had then let fall the watch of the Lord; no, she fayed, ver. 2. *I sleep, but my heart waketh*, there was wakfulness in the hidden man of the heart, though her eyes might be a little drowfie. It may be Christ made no noise without, nor gave any notice he was there; yes, *he knocked*: it may be, he did but only knock, and in the night we are not willing to open the door, unlesse we hear the voice of him that knocketh; I but Christ both knocked and called: It may be she did not know his voice, and therefore did not open; a chaste wife will not at unseasonable hours, arise and open her doors unto a stranger in her husbands absence: I, but she knew his voice, *vers. 2. It is the voice of my well beloved that knocketh*: It may be Christ onely knocked and called, like a friend in his journey, onely to enquire how it fared with her, or to speak unto her at the window; nay, he spake his plain meaning, *He bad her open unto him*, which implies his desire to have entered her house: It may be Christ had given her some distast, had let fall some unkind words, which made her a little pettish (a common fault among women) or else the match was broke off; no, Christ owns her as his Beloved, and courts her with the most winning and amicable tearms of love, *My Sister, my Love, my Dove, my undefiled*: I but it may be Christ was too quick for her, gave but a knock and a call, and was gone, before she could rise and open the door; No, *Christ stayed till his head was filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night*: Christ stands bare headed, and that in foul weather, yea, in the night time, wooing, intreating, and beseeching admittance, yet could obtain none, but must go seek lodging in some other place, as one says: All these circumstances being put into the ballance, do sadly speak out both the fault and folly of the Church, and give full testimony to those distempers, which seize upon the best Saints; But how

Dr. Richard.
see in loc.

did the Lord Jesus, the best and great Physician, bring off the Church from this distemper? Why *vers. 4. He put in his hand by the bole of the door*, the key hole: Why his hand? the reason of the phrase may be this; we know the hand is the chief instrument of action, with that we work, we write, we fight, &c. So the spirit is as the hand of Christ, by him he convinceth, quickeneth, teacheth, comforteth, illigheneth, and strengtheneth his people, as *Act. 11. 20, 21.* those that were scattered---spake unto the Grecians, and preached the Lord Jesus, *And the hand of the Lord was with them, so that a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord*; so powerful and present was the spirit of the Lord, in succeeding their Gospel-Ministry, that faith was wrought in many of the Gentile-Grecians---here the hand of the Lord implied the blessing power and concurrence of the spirit of Christ; so Christ put in his hand by the key-hole, that is sent in his spirit to awaken, reprove, and convince the spouse of her great unkindness toward him: by the way take this note, *That the spirit can finde a passage into the heart, though the doors be barred and bolted never so fast: The key of David will open any lock*; Satan with all his skill and artifice cannot frame a lock of such cros and curious wards and work, that this key cannot open: the spirit acts with irresistibility in the saving communications of grace to the stoutest sinner: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do, was *Sauls* question; the lock was soon opened, the spirit had quickly got into his heart: So here, the spirit was quickly within doors, and what then? her bowels were moved for Christ, she had no rest in her spirit; her bowels yearned after him; *There was a strange tumult raised within her*, the word carries that signification, her heart aaked and quaked, being by the spirit convinced of her unkind and inconjugal carriage toward her dear Lord: This brought her off from her bed; now she could put on her coat, and feared not the scolding of her feet; she starts and stirs, and hastens to open the door, and as soon as she had taken the key in her hand, *Her hands dropt with myrrhe, and*

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her fingers with sweet suelling mirrbe, that is, she had new tokens of Christs good-will, refreshing consolations from a comforting spirit, which being added to her former experiences of love, had such a force upon her heart, that she breaks off all delay, runs to the door and opens, and not finding her beloved there, she fails; poor heart! she sinks down and swoons; the sence of Christs dear affection to her, and her disloyal carriage to him, did foize upon her, that she sinks under it: And being come to her self, she seeks and enquires after him, suffers for him, breaths out her soul in strongest affection towards him, breaks forth into highest Eulogies and commendations of him, and thought he whole Song you never finde her under any of this heart-deadness any more, but full of love and full of life: Thus it was with the Church of Israel, *Hof. 2.* The Lord brings her in *vers. 5.* speaking forth such resolutions as these, *I will go after my lovers that give me my bread and my water; my wooll and my flax, mine oyle and my drinke,* as if she had said, I am resolved to stick close to mine Idols, who have recomenced my service with such plenty and abundance; The allusion is to a man and his wife, betwixt whom (before there is a final divorce and departure) there is usually some decay of conjugal affection, some neglect of conjugal duties, some eminent failing in conjugal offices, and thereupon follows a strangeness, and at length a parting asunder: So heart-deadness, damps of zeal, flatness of spirit, freezings of affection, neglect of communion in the Gospel-duties and appointments, formality in profession, earthly-mindedness and some kind of liberty and boldness to sin are usually precedaneous to an Apostacy and departure from God, Thus it was with *Ephraim*: But how doth she recover her self? Why verse 7. she argues her spirit into a returning frame, *I will go and return unto my first husband,* for then *was it better with me then now*; Hence it is the note of a late gouldy Divine, *That the sight and sence of this, how much better it was when the heart did cleave to Christ, then it is now since its departure from Christ, is an effectual means to*

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crush the heart to return unto him : He brings in a repenting backslider under these reasonings of heart : Heretofore I was able, through Gods mercy, to look upon the face of God with joy ; when my heart did cleave to him, when I did walk close with him, then the glory of God did shine upon me, and caused my heart to spring within me, every time I thought of him : But now, now, God knows (though the world takes little notice of it) the very thoughts of God are a terrour unto me, the most terrible object in all the world, is to behold the face of God : *Oh it was better with me, then it is now.*

Before this my Apostacy, I had free access unto the throne of grace, I could come with humble and holy boldness unto God, and pour out my soul before him : such a chamber, such a closet can witness it ; but now I have no heart to pray, ye I must be haled to it : merely conscience palleth me to it : yea, every time I go by that very closet, where I was wont to have that access to the throne of Grace, it strikes a terrour to my heart ; I can never come into Gods presence, but it is out of slavish fear ; *Oh it was better with me then, then it is now.*

Before, Oh the sweet communion my soul enjoyed with Jesus Christ ! one dayes communion with him, how much better was it, then the enjoyment of all the world ! but now Jesus Christ is a stranger to me, and I a stranger unto him : Before, Oh those sweet enlargements that my soul had in the Ordinances of God ! when I came to the word, my soul was refreshed, was warmed, my heart was enlightened : when I came to the Sacrament, oh the sweetness that was there ! and to prayer with the people of God, it was even an heaven upon earth unto me, but it is otherwise now, the Ordinances of God are dead and empty things to me : *Oh it was better with me then, then it is now.*

Before, Oh the gracious visitations of Gods spirit, that I was wont to have, yea, when I awaken'd in the night season, oh the glimpses of Gods face that were upon my soul : what quickening

quickenings and enlivenings and refreshings did I find in them ! I would give a world but for one nights comfort, I sometimes have had by the visitations of Gods spirit, but now they are gone. *Oh it was better with me then, then it is now.* ---

Before, Oh what peace of Conscience I had within ! whatsoever the world said ; though they railed and accused, yet my conscience spake peace to me, and was as a thousand witnesses for me : but now I have a grating conscience within me ; Oh the black bosome that is in me ! it flyeth in my face every day ; after I come from such and such company : Would come before from the Society of Saints, and my conscience smiled upon me : now I go to wicked company, and when I come home, and in the night, Oh the gnawings of that worm ! *It was better with me then, then it is now.*

Before, The graces of Gods spirit, how were they sparkling in me, active and lively ! I could exercise faith, humility, patience, and the like ; now I am as one bereft of all, unfit for any thing, even as a dead log : before, God made use of me, and employed me in honorable services ; now I am unfit for any service at all --- *Oh it was better with me then, then it is now.* ---

Before, I could take hold upon Promises, I could claim them as mine own, I could look up to all those blessed sweet Promises that God had made in his word, and look upon them as mine inheritance : But now alas ! the Promises of God are little to me : before I could look on the face of all troubles, and upon the face of death, I could look upon them with joy ; But now, the thoughts of affliction, and of death, God knowes how terrible they are to mee ! *Oh it was better with me then, then it is now.* ---

Before, in all creatures I could enjoy God, I tasted the sweetness and love of God, even in my meat and drink : I could sit with my wife and children, and see God in them, and look upon the mercies of God through them, as a fruit of the Covenant of Grace ; Oh how sweet

sweet was it with me then ! But now the creature is as an empty thing unto me, whether it come in love, or hatred, I do not know : *It was better with me before, then now.* ---

Before, I was under the protection of God, wherever I went, but now I do not know what dangers and miseries I am subject to daily, what may befall me before night God only knows: Before, the Saints rejoiced in my company and communion, now every one is shie of me : Before, I was going on in the ways of life ; now these ways I am going in, God knows, and my conscience tells me, are the ways of death : *Oh it was better with me then, then it is now.* ---

I have been large in transcribing these excellent and precious passages, because the times we are cast upon, do much abound with backsliders, and who knows, whether God may not, in a way of recovering mercy, bring this Treatise, and this particular passage under the serious view of some Apostate, and bless it with a healing virtue to his soul, who happily never read it, nor should have opportunity of reading it, in the large Volume of Reverend Mr. Burroughs : And who knows what gracious effect this may have upon some unstable spirits, to settle and fix them sure upon God, that the evil heart of unbelief may never cause their departure from God ? However, there is a usefulness in it to the head we are improving ; And sure, the people of God will find a serious reflection upon the goodness, and good Provisions of God, as an excellent means, to heal heart-distempers, and damps of spirit ; as also, to quicken up, and enflame their zeal and affections more unto God, that they will say, with that holy man, *Psalm. 73.* ver. 28. *It is good for us to draw nigh to God ;* they will find, that it is best with them, when they are nearest to God ; and therefore will bring back their hearts upon any recess from God, by a lively sense of the goodness of the Lord unto them.

3. *Be much in the sense and meditation of grace received,* keep

keep up the consideration thereof vigorous, and lively in your hearts, pray much, preach much, hear much, and as much in the fence of what you were, compared with what, through discriminating and renewing grace, ye now are: How that, except the Lord had been your help, your soules had, not almost, but altogether and for ever dwelt in silence; Oh 'tis of excellent use, they that have tried, have found the usefulness of it: The Apostle Paul, you know, was much in this, as many passages in his Epistles do fully speak to; I shall only instance in that, 1 Tim. i. vers. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. *I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me worthy, putting me into the Ministry; There's a great Emphasis in me, that Jesus Christ should do this for me; why? Who was Paul, or what was he, that it should be owned by him, as such a singular act of Grace, to be put into the Ministry? The next Verse tells you, yea he himself tells you, who was a Blasphemer, and a Persecutor, and Injurious: bad enough; and these words carry weight enough with them: but I obtained mercy: but how did he purchase mercy? Oh the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus; not only Grace but exceeding grace, not only exceeding, but exceeding abundant grace; it is a plenitude, yea a superpleness, and all little enough, I had need of all, I was a Blasphemer, and so sinned against the first Table; I was a persecuter, and so sinned against the second Table; and I was Injurious, and so came near the sinne against the Holy Ghost; and all these together, do sadly speak me, at least in my own sence, the chief of sinners; *primus, quo nullus prior*, --- a file-leader, one that marched in the Van and Front of the battel; *imo, quo nullus pejor*, worse then the worst: He strikes sail, takes down all his Flags, which he displayed, Phil. 3. ver. 4, 5, 6. sit's down in the dust, and view's himself in his lowest abasement; that so, he might the more admire the riches of free grace, and might bring his heart more under command for God, the vouchsafements of whose goodwill had been*

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so free, and so full unto him; neither doth he monopolize this, and drive on a close trade betwixt God and his own soul, as though he would engross all to himself, and cared not how empty other mens coffers were, so that his own were full; like the Merchants of this world; but he commends, and by an Apostolick power, commands this course unto others, as, *Eph. 2. ver. 11, 12, 13, 14.* When he had carried the Ephesian Saints, up into the Paradise of God, and displayed the mysteries and priviledges of grace, even to the ravishment of their souls in the first Chapter, and in the ten first Verses of this, then he comes on with a *Memento*, *Remember that ye being in times past Gentiles in the flesh--- that at that time, ye were without Christ, being Aliens, from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the world*: Ye were in as bad a condition as men could be in: ye dwelt as nigh the borders of *Abaddon*, as people could dwell: no people were in worse trading for heaven, then ye were in: ye had nothing that brought you within the outward Court of the Temple, or gave you the least advance toward happiness; ye were like dogs, *without*, *Apoc. 22. vers. 15.* and how could it be otherwise, seeing your wants and *without*s were so many?

1. Without the Mark of an Israelite in your flesh, as being *uncircumcised*.

2. Without the Camp and Common-wealth of Israel, as being neither *Hebrews* nor *Prosclites*.

3. Without the Covenants, having no covenant right to any spirituall good thing; no, nor earthly neither, as being neither *of the Flesh*, nor *of the Faith of Abraham*, with whom God entered Covenant.

4. Without any hope from the Promise: *τῆς ἐπαγγελίας* *ἐπαγγελίας* *μὴ ἔχοντες*, not having the hope of the Promise, --- or not having hope of peace and reconciliation with God, as being ignorant of the *promised seed*, in the first, or any following Promise:

5. Nay without Christ, without any saving Interest in Christ,

Christ, or knowledge of Christ, untill the Gospel came amongst you; for what could your great Goddess *Diana* make known unto you, of *God manifested in the flesh*? yea,

6. and Lastly, Remember ye were without God in the world, ye were *Æsei*, ye lived like, and were *Atheists in the world*: as 'tis said of the poor *Brasileans* at this day, that they are *sine fide, sine Rege, sine lege*; without common Faith or honesty, without a King, without a Law, either to punish or protect them: So was it with *beastish Ephesians*, and thus also with our *Pagan Predecessors*: — Let me then be thy faithfull Remembrancer, *O England*, to put thee in minde, what thy primitive and first estate was; See thy face in this *Ephesian* glass: what *Ephesians* was, *England* was in each of these particulars: but now how hath the Lord exalted thy born, and brought thy people near unto himself? *Psal.* 148. *ver.* 14. may, may I not apply that of Israel to thee? *Deut.* 4. *ver.* 7. *What Nation is there so great, that hath God so high unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things, that we call upon him for?* Oh that *England* would remember, how it was, and how it is! how it was in *Pagan*, in *Papish*, and *Prelatical* times! and how it is now, as to Liberty, as to Purity, as to Protection, and as to Countenance in all the good ways of God? Sure there would be better bloud, better spirits, better dispositions, and better carriages, in those that are true and genuine *English*, towards God, his ways and people, then now there are, if former times were oftner thought upon; and O that all the Saints would much and often rest & upon what they were; compared with what they are in a spiritual and Gospel account, that you would remember often what you were, and how nigh unto the pit and place of silence, when recovering grace first took hold upon you.

Consider, that misery in which we were all involved through the first Transgression, under which we might truly speak the words of my Text, *Unless the Lord had been our help, our souls had (everlastingly) dwelt in silence*;

silence ; And that I may the more provoke mine own heart and others, to a due, and to a thankfull acknowledgment, of that rich and singular grace, I shall enforce it with these three Considerations.

1. Consider, *The danger we were all exposed unto, by the breach of the first Covenant.*

2. Consider, *What sad distractions the sense of this danger brought forth in our soules, at our first awaking.*

3. Consider, *How unexpected, and how welcome, grace and mercy were then unto us, under all our sad fears, and borrowes.*

Consideration 1. For the First : Work bome upon your hearts, a right sense of the danger we all were exposed unto, by the breach of the first Covenant ; which I shall exemplifie in these words, That man by nature is borne within an hairs breadth of Hell ; upon the very brink of the pit ; so that, except Divine Grace had contributed saving help unto him by Jesus Christ, he would have tumbled from the womb into hell : Nothing but grace, free grace, mere grace, and rich Grace bath preserved man from sliding into the bottomless pit : From nature to grace, and from grace unto glory, is lost man's journey bome again : The journey is long, and man's leggs are weak, and not able to go it ; and therefore God doth bear him from the one to the other, and transerre him all along : Observe the road, You will finde none going that way, but in Christs armes ! It is

Mr. Lokier, in Coll. 1. 13. p. 18.

with man in an estate of nature, as with an Infant in swathing bands, laid upon the sharp ridge of an high building, or upon the edge of a steep precipice, who without some hand to stay it, would soon roul down, and dash it self in peices : The Holy Ghost takes this resemblance of an Infant, *Ezek. 16.* to set forth the helplessness of man in his lapsed estate, *That he was cast forth in the day he was borne, no eye pitying of him, that when he lay in his blood, &c.* the love of the Lord was manifested, who out of pure love, and mere good will, *spread the skirt of his garment over him, and said unto him, Live :* The Apostle *Paul* doth excellently comment upon this

Text

Note.

Text, in *Kom. Chap. 5.* Ver. 6. where he says, *when we were yet without strength, Christ died for us* : How fitly doth this compare with a new born Infant, who hath neither strength to work, nor power to secure its own life from eminent and approaching danger ? The word signifying weak or strengthless ; and wherefore did Christ die for strengthless sinners ? what moved the Lord Jesus to receive that dreadful charge of wrath from God and man ? *The just to suffer for the unjust ? why, when they lay in their blood, their time was a time of love from the Eternal Father,* Ver. 8. *God commendeth his love unto us, in that whilst we were sinners Christ died for us* ; Jesus Christ came upon the Errand of his Fathers love : that cup which his Father put into his hand, to drink, was brimmed up with his love to sinners ; *Oh ! Amorem illius*, Love that love of his, and never leave meditating thereon, *donec totus fixus in corde, qui totus fixus in cruce*, Until whole Christ be fixed in your hearts, who was fastened on the Cross : But if you ask (as some proud Justiciaries have done) What needed all this affection in the Father, and all this affection on the Son ?

I answer, The necessity of sinfull man required all this to keep him out of Hell.

I. Reason. *Because man in his natural capacity, is under the first Covenant, as he hath his standing in the first Adam* : Now *Rom. 3.* ver. 20. The Apostle speaketh plainly, that *by the deeds of the Law, there shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God*, not they who were Jews by nature, no more than they who are sinners of the Gentiles, *Gal. 2.* ver. 15, 16. and *Gal. 3.* ver. 10. He concludes positively, *as many as are of the works of the Law, are under the Curse*, confirming this Thesis with a double Reason, *First*, *because Every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them, is cursed* for which Assertion he quoteth *Deut. 27. 26.* Here's an Obligation of Individualls to Individualls ; every person is obliged to every precept, yea, to continue in the doing of them, the word signifying, *perfect and firme, like a four squared stone in a building*, without

Bernard.

Reasons

jecting or joggng a hairs breadth out of its place, and that under penalty of the Curse.

His 2. Reason is this: Because, *The just shall live by his faith*, Hab.2. *vers.4.* The spring of spiritual and eternal life is in Jesus Christ, *John 14. vers.19.* Because *I live, ye shall live also*: The life of grace is derivative from Jesus Christ, and Faith fetcheth both the Comforts of spiritual, and Assurances of Eternal life from the same fountain; and now, that all men, in their natural estate, stand in the first *Adam*, and in the first Covenant, and so are liable unto condemnation, is clear in many Scriptures *Rom. 5.* from *Vers. 12.* to the end takes in both.

II. Reason. *Because man in a state of nature, is under such an impotency and weakness, which rendereth a perfect obedience unto the Law of works, impossible unto him*: He was so wounded and weakened by his fall, his bones were so shattered and broken, and out of joynt, that there remains no strength at all in him; as, suppose a man should fall from an high scaffold upon the hard stones, and suppose his life should by a providential miracle be preserved, yet his legs and armes, and back-bones, and all, should be broken and disjointed, a total dislocation of all bones: Alas, what strength would there be in this man for labour? what service would he be able to perform? he would not be able to stirre hand or foot, to do any work; thus was it with man in his fall, upon a spiritual account, it was an exceeding high tower that he fell from, he was seated in an estate, but *a little lower then the Angels*, placed in Paradise, created in a state of holiness, and innocency, bearing the image of his maker, drawn out in lively characters upon his soul; all which speak his primitive and first estate, to have been a glorious and raised condition, the falling from which must needs enervate his soul, yea break all his bones in peices: Hence the Apostle speaking of man in his lapsed estate, *Rom. 5. Vers.6.* affirms him to be *without strength*, and of himself *speaks*, Chap. 7. *ver. 18.* *I know, that in me, that* is

is in my flesh, as I am a son of the first *Adam*, and as my nature stands in him under the fall, *there dwelleth no good thing*, nor habitual inclinations to that which is really and savingly good, that he intends this, will be evident, if we consider what he speaks, 2 Cor. 3, ver. 5. Not that *we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing*, as of our selves, but *our sufficiency is of God, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure*, Phil. 2, ver. 13, and wherefore doth God work both to will and to do, but because we are able neither to will nor to do in our own strength ? for alas ! the Law could not do, could not answer the demands of God, and why ? *in that it was weak through the flesh*, Rom. 8, 2, 3. or in that, man weakened by the fall was not able to bring forth perfect righteousness by his obedience to the Law ; now then, if the root and power of thinking, willing, and doing any thing that is good, be not in our nature, but supernaturally wrought in us by grace ; how much less are we able, of our selves by any connate principles or abilities, to yield perfect obedience to the Law, without which there can be no salvation in the way of the first Covenant.

III. Reason. Because, as man stands in the first *Adam*, and in the first Covenant, *he is born a child of wrath, under the indignation of a just and righteous God*. Thus the Apostle, Eph. 2, ver. 3. *And were by nature children of wrath, Deives, damnati priusquam nati*, condemned before conceived ; now then, if we be born children of wrath, it must be by nature, or by grace ; not by grace, therefore by nature : and if by nature, then either by nature corrupted in the first *Adam*, or by nature renewed in the second *Adam*, not by nature renovated and repaired in the second *Adam*, and therefore it follows, that by nature corrupted in the first *Adam* ; we are the children of wrath ; for the first man (by his fall) corrupted the whole nature, and now nature thus corrupted pollucth every man ; as a garment infected by the plague, spreads a contagion through the whole body of a sound man, who puts it on whilst the infection abides in it ;

Hence,

August.

Hence *Gen. 5. v. 3. Adam*, an hundred and thirty years after his fall, supposing he fell in the same day wherein he was created (began *Seth*, in his own likeness, after his image, in respect both of corruption, and liableness to condemnation : for if that phrase *Gen. 1. vers. 26, 27. God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*, is to be expounded by that of the Apostle, *Eph. 4. vers. 24. That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of truth*, as surely in part it is, then *Adam's* begetting a son in his own likeness, after his image, mult needs imply his communicating his corrupt nature by generation unto him, which is the old man, corrupt according to the deceitfull lusts, in the Apostles language, and to originall sinne is not by imitation onely, but by propagation.

1. This then shew's the Saints how little beholding they are to old *Adam*, for those spiritual attainments they have arrived at ; that those gracious habits and dispositions of the soul, whereby they are carried out in their desires and affections, after that which is good, were not the Legacies and bequeathments of their first parents ; much less are those principles and that power whereby they are enabled to act and do, what is well-pleasing to God, an estate of inheritance descended upon them from Grand-fire *Adam* ; all the Saints may speak the words of *Rachel* and *Leah*, *Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our fathers house ? for he hath sold us, and quite devoured our money*, *Gen. 31. vers. 14, 15*. This is undoubtedly true upon a spiritual and saving account, being applied by believers to their standing in the first *Adam* ; as if a Merchant should have a great stock given him by his father, and should at his first setting up, drive on a very full trade, but afterwards, through his own improvidence and carelesnes, should be such a Bankrupt, that he had not one penny left, either to help himself, orto leave his Son ; and yet his son through the bounty of a noble friend is furnished with a trading stock, and grows wealthier then ever his father was, trades upon

upon surer tears than ever his father did; whom may the son thank for all this? his father or his friend? Thus it was with *Adam*, and thus it is with believers, as you may easily make out, if ye procure the resemblance in your own thoughts; they may truly say with *Jacob*, *Gen. 32. ver. 10. with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands*: That Gold where-with they are made rich, above the wealth of *Croesus*, yea of both the Indies, they have not out of old *Adams* coffers: That *white raiment*, fine and clean, which covers the shame of their nakedness, and renders them more glorious than *Solomon* in all his glory, comes not out of old *Adams* wardrobe; and that *eye-salve*, the anointing wherewith gives light and sight far above the enlightening of *Jonathan*, when he had tasted that *honey-dew* with the tip of his rod, is not taken out of old *Adams* gallipots; no, *Apoc. 3. ver. 18*. Christ call's them to his mart, and *S Paul* asserts, *That by grace we are saved, not of works, not of our selves*, *Ephes. 2. vers. 8, 9.* the reason is added, *vers. 10. --- Saints as Saints, Believers as Believers, are the workmanship of God, in a Creation way, by Jesus Christ*: O then, what cause of thankfulness have the Saints, since all their enjoyments are the products of free-mercy, and their whole way to glory is paved with free-grace. This also fully evinceth this truth, *That eternal life is the free gift of God by Jesus Christ*, and shews the Saints, whom to own, as the fountain of life and light in them, and to them, to wit, the God of all Grace, by whose discriminating grace in Jesus Christ, *They are appointed not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ, 1 Thes. 5. 9. who of God is made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1. vers. 30.* Away then with that rotten opinion that some have, that are unacquainted with Divine truth, the aliusficiency of Christ, and the mercies of God in Christ, that consider not the vileness of our nature, and the infinite majesty of God. They will have the Gentiles saved by the light of nature, and the Jews saved by the Law of *Moses*, and Christians by

by the Gospel of Christ, as if there were some other means to come to heaven, and to the favour of God, then by Christ; whereas now, all that we have, must be by Promises, and all the Promises we have are in Christ, they are all yea in him, without him there is no intercourse between the Majesty of God, and us; Therefore *Acts* 4. vers. 12. *There is no name under heaven whereby we can be saved, but by the name of Jesus,* which not onely confutes the devilish opinion and conceit that some have, but also the charitable error of others, that think the Heathens that never heard of Christ shall be saved: I leave them to their Judge: we must go to the Scriptures; all the promises are in Christ, in him they are yea, in him they are made; in him they are Amen, in him they are performed; out of him we have nothing, out of the Promises in him we have nothing, says Reverend Doctour *Sibs*, in *2 Cor.* I. v. 20. Page 412. Nor can we who are Christians say, that if nature had not helped us, if free will had not step'd in to the rescue of us, our souls had dwelt in silence, we had perished to all Eternity; but if God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us, had not quickened us together with Christ, when we were dead we should have continued dead; and had he not saved us by grace, when we were in our sinnes, we had lain under the guilt of them for evermore; yea, as a confirmation of the pride of man, in crying up the power of nature, they must say, *Of him and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for evermore, Rom.* 11. 36. that grace preventing, subduing, renewing, effectual, &c. are all from God, who was pleased that all fullness should dwell in Jesus Christ, the second *Adam*, *That of his fullness we all might receive grace for grace, John* 1. 16. A latitude answerable to all commands, a perfection answerable to Christs own perfection, in the matter though not in the measure, for in Christ there is *plentudo totius*, the fullness of a fountain, *in the belt of Saints*, but *plenitudo vas*, the fullness of a vessel, or grace upon grace, a daily

Dr. Preson.

P. 501.

daily encrease of grace, *gratiam nova gratia cumulatim*—
All from God through Jesus Christ, which excellently

appears by ten Arguments in the words of an ancient Father, *Mr. Reclur* ther, by a godly and Judicious Divine, I shall only name in his light—the heads and refer you to the book, for the fuller en-
less Ser, p. largement : The main scope of the Author is to assert the
62, 63, 64, free and sole agency of God, in the production and
65, &c. work of grace, against such as would advance free-will
and the power of nature, as also that the Lord is the
Alpha and Omega of mans salvation : And this is made
good from these considerations.

Confid. 1. From Gods promise to *Abraham* touching
the faith of the Gentiles, the whole of which faith is
from God, and godliness from faith purifying the
heart.

2. From differing grace, God alone maketh one to
differ from another.

3. From Election, what Israel sought, he obtained not,
but the election hath obtained, and the rest were hard-
ned.

4. From the efficacy and peculiarity of grace depend-
ing upon election, as many as were ordained to eternal
life, believed.

5. From the salvation of infants, taken into the bosom
of Gods electing love, before they had done either good
or evil.

6. From the person of the Mediator, who himself is
likewise a clear light of predestination and grace, who is
the chief corner-stone, elect, precious, &c.

7. From the corruption of nature express'd in hard-
ness of heart ; the election hath obtained, the rest were
blinded or hardened.

8. From the increase of sin by the law in the natural
man, sin taking occasion by the commandment, works in
him all manner of concupiscence.

9. From the subjection of the natural man to the de-
vil, the spirit that now worketh in the children of diso-
bedience.

10. From

10. From the thanksgiving and prayers of Saints, upon the account of grace received, which considerations do fully assert the doctrine of free-grace, and lay obligations upon the Saints to own and admire with thankfulness the grace and good will of God in Jesus Christ.

3. Is man by nature born within a hairs breadth of hell? is the work of grace and the reward of grace in glory only from free-grace and meer-grace? Away then with that opinion which advanceth corrupt nature into the throne, and makes it (at least copartner with the grace and Son of God in the great work of salvation: what do they but in a great measure proclaim, that Christ dyed in vain? what else do such sayings as these import? *mihi soli deo*, I owe all to my self; *ego me ipsum discerno*, I make my self to differ from others; and that *they can repent*, that *they can believe*; it is from God; but that *they do repent*, that *they do believe*, is from the liberty of their own free-will: yet alas! all the arguments and oratory, boistings and bravadoes of *Arminius* will be but as the staff of *Elisba* to the dead child, or as the Jews tears shed over the grave of dead *Lazarus*, or as the exorcismes of the sons of *Sceva*, they will avail little, either to light or life, grace or growth, without the concurrence of the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus: Christians do finde by daily and sad experience, that the power of godliness would be but poorly advanced in them, if they had no other power to aſt by, then that of nature; and the work of holiness would be carried on but slowly in them, if they had no better friend then free-will to promote it; they would soon ſtick upon the ſhallows, if the gales and tides of the ſpirit did not waſt them off; their hearts would ſoon be dead, if the ſpirit of the Lord did not quicken them; their affections would ſoon be chilled, if the ſpirit of the Lord did not warm them; their deſires would ſoon be ſtraighted, if the ſpirit of the Lord did not enlarge them; if the ſpirit of the Lord did not help our infirmities, how little ſhould we be unto prayer, and how lifeleſs in prayer: Oh, what-

whatever proud men do vainly boast, let not us sacrifice to our own nets, nor burn incense to our own drags; but say with the Psalmist, *not unto us, not unto us O Lord, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truths sake*, Psal. 115. 1. and in all our duties and devotions, when we do most for God, and act highest for his glory, let us breath out those humble acknowledgements of that holy man, 1 Chro. 29. 14. *Who am I, and what is my people? that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee*. So vers. 6. *O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy Name, cometh of thine hand and is all thine own*: This will be a means to keep our hearts in an humble and dependent frame upon God, and make us acknowledge with the Apostle, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *By the grace of God we are what we are*; and this grace which we humbly confess, to be bestowed upon us, *will not be in vain*, but will make us *labour more abundantly for God*, then they all that proudly assert the power of nature, and yet in all our actions for God, we shall cast down our crowns at the feet of the Lamb, and self-denyingly say, *Not we, but the grace of God which was with us, not we, but thy talents have gained other five*.

3. This makes a sad report of the dangerous estate that all men are in, whilst they are under the power of corrupt nature, they ly upon the brink of the pit, they walk within one inch of Hell, they hang by the twine thread of a frail and brittle life, over that deep and dark dungeon of the great abyfse, ready each moment to drop in: Oh! did they but hear the doleful woes, which are denounced against them, it would be a dreadful found in their ears: Oh their hearts are very hard and their beds very soft, who can quietly sleep out one night, under the apprehension of that sad estate! yet such a lethargy, and spirit of deep sleep hath seized upon most men, that they not onely take a little nap, but fetch many a sound sleep in that dead and untone condition: Oh! if a blind man should wander without a guide

guide, until he came within one step of a great lake of brimstone and fire, and then his eyes should be suddenly open to see the danger he was near unto, what a work would this have upon his spirit? How full of rejoicing and amazement would he be filled with, that he had escaped so great a danger? Or suppose a man should be taken out of a ship, when fast asleep, and should be laid upon the top of a rock in the midst of a deep and broad Sea, what fears would surprize him? what expectations of certain and inevitable death would he be possessed with, when he awakes and seeth neither ship nor land, nor man near him, but is left alone in the wide and wild Ocean? Nay farther, what would be the thoughts and frightments of that man, who should be chained to a brazen pillar, and a thousand Cannons charged and mounted, and ready to be fired upon him? Sure, he would be afraid each moment to be dashed in pieces: But alas! these and all other resemblances, which the heart of man can possibly finde out, fall far short of that deplorable estate natural men are in; they are left upon a rock, ready every minute to be engulfed and swallowed up by the deluge of Divine wrath: all the curses and threatnings of the law, are each moment ready to be discharged upon them, nay, whilst they are securely jogging on in the ways of sin and vanity, the next step they take may tumble them headlong into hell; and yet they are asleep and know not, blind and see not the dangers they are dropping into; and so are they shackled with the fetters of their own corruptions, that they cannot step aside to avoid the danger: Oh were their eyes opened (as once *Barlaams* were) and they awakened (as once *Samson* was) we might wonder, that any natural man kept his wits, that the whole world who lyes in wickedness was not baptized with *Pa'shurs* new name *Magor-Missabib*, viz. fear on every side, *Fer.20.3.* even round about them and to see that dreadful passage made good in every Nation and town, *Rev.6.15,16.* That the Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, & the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man,

and every free-man, should hide themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, and should say into the mountains and rocks fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath is come, and who may abide his coming? Ah surely! the sense of their dreadful misery would suddenly bring them into Nabals condition, their hearts would die within them, and they would be as stones: O how should the sense of this provoke the Saints to own with thankfulness recovering and renewing grace, and especially if we consider, what sad distractions the sense of this danger brought forth in us at our first awaking: Many of the Saints under their first convictions have seen their misery past all hope of remedy.

Consid. 2.

They have had sad visions of wo and wrath at their first enlightening; Many have been the terrors, and great hath been the conternation of spirit, which many have lain under at their first conversion.

Such a sense of sin, wrath and judgement to come hath seized upon them, that Felix-like they have trembled, nay, they have cried out with the Prophet, Isa. 6. ver. 5. Wo is me! I am undone! I am in a lost and perishing estate? and indeed needs must it be thus with them, those especially, who have been brought out of a state of great profaneness, who have acted high and long against the Lord, and there is great reason for it, because they are brought home by a thorough conviction both of sin and wrath; alas! fools as they were, formerly they made a sport of sin, it was but childrens play with them to swear, be drunk, profane Sabbaths, commit uncleanness, &c. they went as nimbly away with all the load of sin upon their consciences, as Sampson did with the gates of Gaza on his shoulders; they wondered at the down exact-looks, and scoffed at the whining complaints of mourning sinners; I, but now the case is altered when the spirit of bondage is upon them to fear; now they find that guilt in sin, feel those pangs of conscience, and fear that indignation from a sin-revenging God, that there

there is no rest in their bones; the arrows of the Almighty stick fast and deep in their souls, now they are pricked in their hearts they feel (as those Jews did *Ag. 2. ver. 37.*) the nails wherewith they had crucified the Lord Jesus, sticking like so many goads, yea stings of Scorpions, fast in their hearts, and cry out, *men and brethren, what shall we do?* or like the Goaler, brummed up with retrour and astonishment, they call out for help, *Sirs what must we do to be saved?* Oh! what will become of us? what will a righteous God do with us? *how shall we escape wrath to come?* What shall we do? what course shall we take? Oh! we shall be in hell, in hell, before help from the Lord will come unto us! It was well replied by a reverend Divine, to one that was under trouble of soul about his salvation. *I tell thee: it is able to trouble the whole world---* how many can speak much to this, the extremities that many awakened sinners have been brought unto, have been very sad! they have been struck down with *Paul*, yea, laid for dead, brought into a despairing condition; they have said, and sigh'd, yea sob'd it out also, can such a wretch as I am hope for mercy? did the Lord Jesus shed his precious blood for such a vile sinner as I am? Is it possible that my abominations should be pardoned? that there should be any accepting grace for me? for me who have been so great a sinner; yea, the chief of sinners, a file-leader in the black regiment of sin? Oh much of this nature (farre beyond what I tell or can expresse) hath fallen from the lips, and lain upon the Spirits of some of the Saints, at their first awaking, being in their own apprehensions irrecoverably undone; hath this been any of your cases? as sure it hath been; Oh then! how should your hearts be drawn out into thankfulness to the Lord, when ye call to remembrance your fears, and tears, and terrors at your first conversion; and then consider *how welcome, and unexpected, grace, mercy, comfort, and the good news of a Saviour were unto you in these bitter agonies*: O how welcome was *Moses*, and his message of freedom from the Lord

Consider. 3.

to the children of Israel, when they were weary of their lives by reason of their hard bondage! how welcome is a calm after a violent storm to the affrighted Mariner? how pleasant is a bright morning after a black night to the wearied traveller? and how doth the heart leap up to meet a message of mercy, when 'tis broken and even spent with misery! when *David* said, *my foot slips*, then it follows, *thy mercy, O Lord, held me up*; and who can estimate the worth of succouring and supporting mercy, at such a pinch? the mothers eye is upon her child, and her hand also to stay it from falling, or to snatch it up so soon as down; the child shall not cry long upon the ground in the mothers hearing, and yet a mother may forget the son of her womb, but *God will not forget his children, Isa. 49. ver. 15*. So soon as ever Israel had cried out, *our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts*, *Ezek. 37. ver. 12*. The Lord replies, *Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come forth of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel*; When the pangs of new birth are strong and violent, even *ad deliquium anime*, to the fainting of the soul, then doth the comforter come in with his cordial spirits, and stay's up the sinking soul; when the Jews laboured for life, being stab'd to the very heart, *Peter* presently applies the promise, and brings forth the new birth in them, *Act. 2. 38*. when the Goaler was even sinking into hell, *Paul* claps to him and stay's him with this Gospel-assurance, *believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, Act. 16. ver. 31*. And what follow's? did the plaister stick? had the word any saving work upon this desperate wretch? yea, ver. 34. *he rejoiced believing in God, with all his house*; here's a strange and sudden change, a blessed turn of things! he that just now was upon the borders of hell, is now brought within the suburbs of heaven, in the joyful apprehensions of pardoning and accepting grace through Jesus Christ: The out-goings of God in comforting his drooping Saints, and his returns unto them after his withdrawals from them, are not lesse, or lesse refreshing.

ing. How did the Spirit of the Church fail within her, *Cant. 5. ver. 6.* when she could not find her dear Redeemer, in his wouted preference of joy and comfort? yet at the end of the chapter, she find's and feel's Christ in her soul, and in a full sense of her interest in, and her union with him, breaks out into these joyful acclamations, *this is my beloved, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, and this is my friend*, memorable is the story of Mr. *William Cooper*, a Scotch Divine, who was early brought into Christ, even when he was a School-boy, and approved himself before God and good men, to be a pious, painful, and profitable Pastour of the Lord's flock, his usual course being to preach five times a week; but this could not secure him from Satans buffetings, being exercised with inward temptations and great variety of spiritual combats: a short account whereof with the gracious returns of God in mercy to his soul, I shall give you in his own words, reported by Mr. *Clark in vita patrum*: "Once, sayes he, "in great extremity of horror and anguish of spirit, "when I had utterly given over, and looking for nothing but confusion; suddenly there did shine, in the "very twinkling of an eye, the bright and lightsome "countenance of God, proclaiming peace, and confirming it with invincible reasons: Oh what a change was "here in a moment? the silly soul that was even now at "the brink of the pit, was instantly raised to heaven, to "have fellowship with God in Jesus Christ: then was I "touched with such a lively sense of a Divinity, and "power of a Godhead in mercy reconciled with man, "and with me in Christ, as I trust my soul shall never "forget: Glory, glory, glory, be to the joyful deliverer "of my soul out of all her troubles forever. How fully doth this president speak to the consideration proposed! He that was under such an eclipse of light and comfort, that his soul did almost dwell in silence, now found such sweet and seasonable out-breakings of peace and joy from the presence of the Lord, that were to him as life from the dead, and gave him a blessed opportunity of prailing

*Mr. Clark
in vita
Patrum.*

praising God in the land of the living : How many examples of the like nature may be gathered up ? and how many Saints, now alive, can bear witness to these things in their own experience ? how have the wounded in spirit found truth and healing in that passage ? *Hof. 16. ver.*

1, 2, 3. *He hath torn, and he will heal us, he hath broken, and he will bind us up: after two dayes he will revive us, and in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight, then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord, that his going forth in relieving and refreshing mercy to his distressed ones, is prepared, nay decreed, as the morning.* First suddenly, second certainly, third comfortably, past all possibility of

disappointment : Sathan and his agents may as easily hinder the day from dawning, and the Sun from rising when the appointed minute for each is come, (which which are fixed by the unrepeatable ordinance of the great Creatour, *Jer. 33. v. r. 20.*) as prevent the dawning of comfort, or darken the irradiations of the Son of righteousness, when he is pleased to shine into the souls of his drooping ones : Nay farther, *He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and the former rain to the earth ;* both were certain in the land of Canaan (unless held back in wrath) the first at seed-time to soften the ground, and the latter a little before harveſt to plump and pumple the corn in the ear ; in like sort, as renewing to reviving grace is certain : as the former came unto us, to convert us when we were sinful, so the latter shall come to comfort us, when we shall be sorrowfull : O precious mercy ! read and enlarge this in your own thoughts ; and take these few hints as helps, which are more insisted upon by Mr. *Barrington*.

Mr. *Barrington's* *Lecture in loc.*

1. The Time of Gods delivering his people is the morning, he takes the first and best opportunity, after a sad and dark night.

2. Tis Gods presence that makes morning to the Saints, all naturall helps cannot do it.

3. Gods mercies to his people are prepared and decreed mercies.

4. The

4. The Saints in the night of affliction comfort themselves with this, that the morning is a coming.

5. The Church hath no afflictions upon her, but there comes a morning after them.

6. A little before the Saints deliverance out of their greatest disturbances of misery and trouble, the darkness of their night is the greatest; therefore be not dismayed, although not a starre appears in your night of trouble; for the morning is approaching: that darknesse is the Prodromus, it ushers in the Phosphorus, the bright morning starre of joy and comfort: neither let the scoffing of *Ismaels* of the world take advantage from the drouping of Saints to reproach Religion; for *Psal. 97. ver. 11. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladnesse for the upright in heart*: they have light and gladnesse *in semine*, at their first conversion, and at their first entrance into a distressed estate: the husbandman sets a harvest value upon his land, when the seed is harrowed in, because he trusts to the word of Gods Covenant with *Noah*: So may a believer who hath had a seed time of grace passe over his soul, comfort himself that he shall have his harvest time of joy also: 'tis sown, and covenant dewes will ripen it in due time; and therefore you who think so basely of the Gospel, and the professours of it, because at present their peace and comfort is not come (at least in any measure unto some, but rather sorrow and mourning) know it is on the way to them, and comes to stay everlastingly with them: whereas your peace is going from you every moment, and is sure to leave you without any hope of ever returning to you again. Look not how the Christian begins, but ends: The Spirit of God by his convictions comes into the soul with some terrours, but it closeth with peace and joy; as we say of the moneth of *March*, it enters like a Lion, but goes out like a Lamb: Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace---O then ye servants of the Lord, be much patient and serious in meditating upon recovering and relieving grace under those three particulars mentioned, and you will

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will find excellent advantages thereby; you will live at the best rate of a spiritual and happy life; which I shall evince in three considerations.

Consid. I. You will live best to God.

2. You will live best to your selves.

3. You will live best to others.

1. *You will live best to God and for God*, if you often remember how near to silence your souls have been upon a spirituall account; if you often meditate in what dark and dangerous paths you once walked; what a load of lust and sin you lay under; how thwart your principles and practices were to God and godlinesse; how you walked in time past according to the course of this world; *the mundanity and worldlinesse of the world*, as the *Syriack* renders it, which is wholly set upon wickednesse, and lyes soakt in sin; and according to the *Prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*, Ephes. 2. ver. 2. as a Smith worketh in his forge, and an Artificer in his shop; that ye were the devils journey-men, your members as his working-tools, your souls as his shop, wherein, and by which, he carried on that cursed trade of sin; Oh! the sence of this will marvellously draw the soul after God, and prevail with you to live unto God, which is the great end of living, *Rom. 14. ver. 8.* the truth whercof is evidenced in three particulars.

1. *You will live most by faith upon God*; you will act faith in a more immediate and fiduciall dependency upon the Lord: *Try and then trust is the worlds motto*: now when you have a present sence upon your souls, of what the Lord hath done for you; how and in what methods of grace the Lord appeared to you, when you walked upon the brink of hell, and were ready every moment to drop into the pit: this will work an holy boldnesse in your hearts, this will answer all carnall cavills; it will silence all the objections of your distrustfull hearts, and bring up your spirits bravely to *Jobs* resolution, *Job 13. ver. 15. Though he slay me yet will I trust in him*; he shall not be so rid of me: I will hang on him still, and if I must dy I will dy

dy at his feet ; I, and remember the waves of God unto me, his wayes of grace and mercy and free redemption, when my estate was sad and bad, and therefore under all those showers of arrows, which fly from the Almighty against me, and drink up my moisture, I will rouse my self upon him, trust in him, I, and *be also shall be my salvation*, see further, ver. 16, 17, 18, 19. --- Oh if any man lives to God, *the just man doth, who lives by his faith*, and fetcheth life and strength for his faith from his own experiences : All the world could not shake the holy confidences of Saint Paul, when he had argued out the experiences of the grace and good will of God in Jesus Christ unto himself and believers, *Rom. 5. ver. 16, 17, 18.* then chap. 8. he begins conclusively there is therefore now no condemnation, not one condemnation; and carries it on at that high rate of assurance that ver. 33, 34. he doth *arriem mittere*, take *signat*. against him; *who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? who shall condemn? who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* As if he had said, O thou malicious devil, that dost let fly at me with thy darts! Oh ye deluded Hereticks Mr. Baxter, and infidels that fill my ears with your foolish Sophismes, Spirits w^t and trouble me with your disputes against the Lord my self to the Redeemer; go to them that make a Religion of their opinion, and whose belief was never any deeper then their fancies; go to them that never knew what it was to love Christ, to desire after him, to delight in his salvation, nor to hope through believing for his promised blessedness hereafter; these you may possibly draw away from Christ, and make Infidels of them, that were never true Believers; but do you think to do so by me? what weapons, what arguments do you think to prevail by? shall tribulation be the means? why, I have that promise in the hand of my faith, and that glory in the eye of my hope, that will bring me through tribulation: shall distress do it? why, I will rather stick to much the closer to him that will relieve me in distress, and bring me unto his rest

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And so this reverend Author proceeds and you may further prosecute in your own thoughts : Oh ! that soul that hath the advantage of experiences, and wisely improves the sense of grace received, is bravely fortified against temptations to infidelity, and will as faith upon the sure mercies of *David* the oath and covenant of God in the saddest conflicts.

2. You will live best to God, *Because you will live most in the love of God*; when you consider much, and with much seriousness, what God hath done for you, in order to eternity; you will be drawn out in your affections unto God, God will have more of your hearts then he hath of many others, who make as big and bulke a profession as you do; and how can it be otherwise, when you fasten this meditation upon your hearts? we might have been in hell in an undone condition, past all hope or possibility of help from Angels or men, had not God, *who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, quickened us together with Christ*, Eph. 2. 4, 5. when you look upon the whole business of your salvation as transacted and carried on by God, and that in a way of free-grace, rich mercy, and meer good will and love, this will marvelously draw out your love to God, for *amor amoris magnus*, love is the loadstone of love, there is a magnetick vertue in it to draw out the very heart of a beloved person, *Cant* 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse---thou hast behearted me*, taken away my heart, as he that hath his head taken away, is said to be beheaded: Oh ! Christ knew the affections of his Spoule unto him, and therefore makes a full return of love unto her again: So the Apostle 2 Cor. 5. 14. *The love of Christ constrains me*; I am wholly under the power of love, made willing to do or suffer anything, or to be led any whither by this cord of love, that is cast upon me by the Lord Jesus Christ; indeed the Lord is first in affection, 1 *Job*. 4. 19. *He first loved us*. The air receives its light from the Sun, the Sun must first shine and send forth his beams before the air can be radiant: So the Lord

Lord must let in some fence of good will into the soul, before she stirs out in affections unto him; but now, when *she comprehends with all Saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and knows the love of Christ which passeth knowledge*, Eph. 3.18,19. and lives in the sense of Gods peculiar and discriminating love unto her: Oh! this fills her with holy affections unto the Lord, the Church is then sick of love; *David* cries out, *O how I love the Lord!* my heart is ready to break, it is so full of love to God; I cannot make a narrative of my love, it is so vast, so boundless unto God: This fixeth the creatures love upon God, the stability of the Saints love doth very much arise from this; *Saran* will have a hard pluck of it, to pull a truly-loving-believer from the arms of his beloved Jesus, when he remembers that love *of his first espousals*, how Christ took upon him, and washed him from his blood, and spake peace to his wounded, self-condemned soul; when he remembers the straight that his Jesus brought him out of, and the miseries which he rescued him from, when he thinks thus with himself, Oh what should I have done, if I had not had a Christ? what should I have done in my fears and griefs? what should I have said to an accusing conscience? how should I have escaped the jaws of the devourer? Oh! these reviews do mightily renew his love, these thoughts and remembrances do kindle such a strong and sacred fire of love in his heart, that many waters cannot quench it, and all temptations to break with Christ are made invalid: It is the heart and not the head that holds Christ fast; I held him and would not let him go, says the Church, *Cant.* 3.4. Love will hold Christ, when reason alone will let him go, *Rom.* 8.35. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* *Paul* puts the question in this verse, but draws up a peremptory conclusion, and that with a full assurance, *verse* 38, 39. *I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of*

God

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Calvin.

Beza. &c.

Piscator.

Ambrose.

August.

Erasmus.

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of the

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Mr. Baxter,

Spirits wit-

ness to

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God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; Expositors do much differ, about the sense of these words, some understand them as speaking of Christs love to us; some of the sense and feeling of Christs love unto us: others of our love to Christ, or in a conjunct sense, both of Christs love to us, and our love unto Christ: But surely the Apostle speaks at this rate: what can unclasp those mutual embracements between Christ and his people? or what can separate us from Christ, by withdrawing or destroying our love to him, and consequently turning his love from us? we have many assaults, but all in vain; for when a Believer reflects upon what Christ hath done for him, considers the death, resurrection, and intercession of Jesus Christ, with the precious fruits of all unto his soul, and that out of pure love, who deserved to be an object of eternal hatred, this makes the pulse beat quick and high in holy affections to the Lord Jesus: And the want of this due reflection upon what by nature we were, and what now by grace we are, dasheth the rising flames of an holy affection in us to the Lord Jesus.

3. You will live best unto God; because, *You will live best in thankfulness unto God*, when you live in the sense of what God hath done for you; it is the consideration of divine grace and mercie which drawes out the soul in praises unto God; the thoughtfull Christian is the thankfull Christian; he that pondereth most upon mercies, prayeth God most for mercies: Oh! when you take a serious review, of that change which is upon your hearts, of the drawings of your soules heaven-ward, and holiness-ward; and compare time with time, state with state, what you were, with what you are; how once you affected sinne, but now abhor it; how once you loathed Ordinances, but now you love them; how once the wayes and people of God were distastefull unto you, but are now delightfull; how little you had once to shew for heaven, and how much you have now through grace to shew against Hell; Oh! this will give the heart a notable vent, and fill the cup of praise up to the brim;

brim; *Psal.* 103. ver. 1, 2, 3. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, (sayes holy David) but doth he stay here? no, and all that is within me bless his holy name; every instrument must be put into tune; every musical key must be touched, every string must be stopt, and every string must be struck to sound forth the praises of God --- nay again; Bless the Lord, O my soul, and why so? what's the reason of this thankfulness? O soul? thou hast great cause to be thankful, For,*

1. He forgiveth all thine iniquities, thou hadest the guilt of many and great sinnes upon thee, which would have sunk thee down into Hell, and *Jehovah* hath given thee pardon of them all: nay farther,

2. He healeth all thy diseases; thou wast full of noise and unclean distempers, many running sores of filthy lusts, and *Jehovah* hath vouchsafed healing grace unto thee: Thou art now a justified and a sanctified person.

3. Thou art now redeemed from Hell and destruction, and wearest the loving-kindnesses and tender mercies of God as a royal Diadem, upon thy head, and therefore *Oh my soul, bless, bless, bless Jehovah: Oh if ever we come to such a sense of pardoning, healing, redeeming, crowning, satisfying, and renewing grace from the Lord, as David, we shall then take up David's harp, and awake our glory to the praises of a good God: could we but fasten this upon our spirits, that distinguishing grace hath severed us from those heaps of rubbish that we were mingled with, and cull'd us out from the rabble of the world, that we were herded with; our spirits would be turned to this evangelical duty, and dirty; and if so, how like heaven it self would the Church look? how would the militant, resemble the triumphant Jerusalem? and how would every neck of the Gospel-world ring with the praises of God: The *Mr. Baxter's* liveliest embleme of heaven that I know upon earth, is, Part 4. when the people of God, in the deep silence of the *Saints Rest*, excellency and bounty of God, from hearts abounding page 134. with*

with love and joy, dō joyn together both in hearts and voices, in the cheerfull and melodious singing of his praises.

4. You will live best unto God, because *You will live most to the glory of God*, fence of grace received will enflame you with a greater zeal for God, and will put every wheel into motion: We are naturally flow to action upon the best account; the best drive on but heavily; few drive at *Jehu's* rate; very few there be, whose soules make them *as the chariots of Amindab*; that make haste in Gods work, *like the roe, or young hart upon the mountains of spices*. If ever Christians drove heavily, the Christians of this age do; if ever the elementary constitution of the Church was earth and water, now it is, little of fire appears, unless in unhappy contentions and animosities, or else in love to the world; and thus, most are red hot, their affections all on a flame; the Lord quench them: But Oh! where is their zeal for God? where is the courage, activity, and resolution for God? where's the minding of the things of God, and holy contendings for God, which the Puritans of old (that were Puritans of the good old way) have discovered? there is too much of the *Laodicean* spirit; too many *Galio's* amongst us; men are high indeed to enthrone their own opinions, and persuasions, whilst Religion, in the main duties of it, is neglected, they are exact in *tything mini, and commin, and annise, nibile, judgement, mercy, and faith, the weightier matters of the Law are neglected*, *Math. 23. vers. 23*. The great Zealots of the times are for the most part men of corrupt and Heretodox Judgments, who are violent enough to impute their Errours and false conceptions (the Lord take them off from their speed, lest they outrun the Constable, as they have done the Covenant) He's a stranger in Israel, that knows not these things; and he's no true son of Zion, that doth not bewail them; but now would we have the water run in the right channel? would we have our spirits up in a right zeal for God? let our meditations

be often and serious upon what God hath done for our souls; Oh when a Saint seeth oyl from experienced loving kindnesses, it makes the wheels run glib; when he argues; Hath God done thus and thus for me? hath he left others of my kindred, of my contemporaries, of my acquaintance, (who had the same advantages of Education, Ordinances, and Gospel-Opportunities with me) in ignorance and unbelief, and hath he enlightened me? called me? wrought faith in me? appointed me to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ? and shall not I be active for Christ? shall I sit still brooding over a patch of this base world, or drive on the interest of mine own honour or advantage, when the name of God is blasphemed, the honour of Christ is impeached, Gospel-truths are corrupted, Gospel-Ordinances reviled, and the way of God evil spoken of? did *Cresus* his dumb son cry out for the life of his father, and shall I that can speak, now be dumb? *Do I thus requite the Lord? is this my kindness to my friend Jesus? Saint Paul* had another spirit, (like that of *Caleb*) 1 Cor. 15. ver. 8. *last of all he was seen of me also, ὁπὸ κακῶς* --- the emphasis lies in Me, there's an accent upon that word, of Me, vile Me, wretched Me, sinful me, unworthy Me, who was a blaphemer, a persecutor, and an injurious person; but by the grace of God I am what I am; by the Grace, free grace, and rich grace of God, I am a chosen vessel, a servant of the Lord, a believer, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and what followes? doth he lap up this talent in a napkin? doth he sing a requiem to his soul? and bid her take her ease? no (saies he) *his grace which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly than they all*: minde here, how the sense of grace received carries out his soul in activity, for God to labour, yea to abound in labour, for *from Jerusalem round about to Ilyricum, he fully preached the Gospel of Christ*, and wrote more Epistles then all the other Apostles did, hence he exhorteth the Saints vers. 58. *alway to abound in the works of the Lord*: Oh sure, there would not be that selfishness and

and sloth among Christians, if this course was duly practised: a draught of this wine taken next thy heart every morning, would make *the lips of them that are asleep to speak*, Cant-7. vers-9. it would shew its strength and generosity, in a wakening and enflaming the spirits of believers, so that the most dull and flow of speech, would there be made good and eloquent speakers in the cause of God, and thus *live best to God*.

II. *You will live best to your selves, to your own spiritual advantage, if you live much in the sense of grace received:* Gain is a great incitive unto action: what will you give me? was *Judas* his question, and istoo much the compass by which many fail; Christians are generally proud and providential in their family provision: That advice of the Apostle, Rom. 12. 17. *Provide things honest in the sight of all men*, is followed by most, and may be without blame, if the care be moderate and the provision be of things honest, that is, if Christians follow lawful callings, and so play above-board that they be not afraid who see what they do, nor ashamed to be accountable to man for every penny which they return, when they fear neither sin nor shame, though all men were eye witnesses to their way of trading; these are things honest indeed, and if Christians only provided these, the mouths of many would be stopt: yet I will shew you a more excellent way: surely those things which tend to the well-being of the soul, to the enriching of that, and filling your coffers with grace and comfort, thats the way, these are the ~~ways~~ the honest and good things which Christians should trade in, and turn every stone to obtain: now there is no way will sooner do it, and with more safety then that which is mentioned, that will bring in the quickest returns, as will appear in these particulars, if rightly improved.

1. You will live best to your selves upon this account, *Because you will live most off from sin;* sense of pardoning and redeeming, and renewing grace, gives a notable check to lust, and marvellously banks up corruption, Rom. 6. 1, 2. *What*

What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin? we that are justified by faith, & so have peace with God through Jesus Christ, shall we continue in sin? we that have a surer standing in grace through Jesus Christ than Adam had, when he had his standing in innocency, shall we continue in sin? we, who when we were enemies were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, who shall be saved by his life, and having now received the atonement, do joy in God, yea, rejoice in hope of the glory of God, having the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost which is given unto us, shall we continue in sin? Oh! live any longer therein? How shall we, who are dead to sin and unweirded by it, that were unreasonable, and to an ingenious renned nature, impossible: Oh! when a Saint seriously reads over the counsels of God ministered not with ink and paper, but with the blood and spirit of his eternal Son, and that in a way of free-grace and rich mercy, his heart must needs rise against sin, if it be in a right frame: when he argues it out thus, was I born a child of wrath, within a hairs breadth of hell? Did sin and death pass upon me and over me from Adam? was I under judgement by one person, and one sin to condemnation, and have I received abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness to reign in life, by one Jesus Christ? And shall I sin against such a God? against such grace? Oh far be it! did we often remember the dreadful terrors we lay under at our first awakening; the doleful pangs of new birth; the bitter wormwood wine, which we drank in many and large draughts, at our first repentance and sorrow for sin, the sad fears of hell and wrath which overwhelmed us; and then consider the riches of that grace, which hath appeared to us, in converting, quickning, quieting, comforting and securing our souls against wrath to come, we should find them singular, yea, sovereign antidotes against sin, and may hereupon put to silence the most audacious and importunate lusts: See how the Apostle (the weapons of whose warfare were mighty through God, to pull down the strong holds of sin) grapples with the national

and common sin of *Corinth* ? 1 *Cor.* 6. 13, 14. *ad finem* : and that was fornication and uncleanness (a flesh-pleasing sin, natures minion) a sin for which *Corinth* was famous all over the world, having store of Stews, and Brothel-houses, and a temple dedicated to *Venus* full-flockt with notable harlots, yet the Apostle useth this way of Argumentation to bring them off (I mean the *Corinthian Professors*) from all unclean practices, he lays before them.

First, Their former estate, how they were immersed in that sin of uncleanness, and carried away with the torrent of those lusts, some of you were fornicators, adulterers, effeminate.

Secondly, The dangerous condition of those persons who lye and dye in those sinful practices : *they shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven.*

Thirdly, The precious mercy of God unto them in recovering, renewing, pardoning and healing grace, *vers.* 9. *Ye are washed, ye are sanctified ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

Fourthly, Their union with Christ and their engraftment into Christ, *vers.* 15. *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot ? God forbid.*

Fifthly, The indwelling of the holy Spirit, whereby, their bodies are consecrated to be the temples of God, *Know ye not that your bodies is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, whom ye have of God ?*

Sixthly, That these bodies of theirs should be raised up by the power of God at the last day, *vers.* 14. And now what is the answer of a gracious heart to these arguments ? It is true, I have lived in uncleanness ; that sin, unpardoned, excludes from heaven ; but through free-grace I am redeemed by the Lord Jesus and incorporated into him as a member into the head ; my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and it shall be raised up at the last day, fashioned like unto the glorious body of my dear Saviour : And shall I soil my self again in the sink of my former

uncleanneſs? Shall I ſpot my robe again, which hath been waſhed and made white in the blood of the Lambe? Shall I prostitute a member of Chriſt, and detile a temple of the holy and eternal Spirit of Grace? Oh no! I will not, I dare not: Surely ſuch arguings will bring forth ſuch reſolutions, as to an hatred of ſin, and love to holineſs, if we rightly improve them: *If Scipio autem beatum reſected the offer of an harlot, with velleim, ſi non eſſem Imperator, I would if I were not a General; A Saint may much better with à nobis, Chriſtianus ſum--I will not, I am a Chriſtian; this is the ſift benefit you will receive from your keeping up a lively ſenſe of grace received, and ſurely you do then live beſt to your ſelves when you live freeſt from ſin: For,*

1. You will then be freeſt from the rod, a towardly child is not often laid over the knee, nor a cloſe-walking Chriſtian often under the rod; ſin uſually bringeth forth ſufferings, *Pſal. 89. 30--- If his children forſake my law, then verſ. 32. I will viſit their tranſgreſſion with the rod, and their iniquities with ſtripes.*

2. You will have quicker and ſafer returns of your prayers: the dutiful child ſoonest ſpeeds in his requeſts, *Pſal. 66. 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayers; and the Apoſtle teacheth us, that the way to draw nigh unto God, with aſſurance and acceptance, muſt be this, To get our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and our bodies waſhed with clean water, Heb. 10. 22.*

3. You will keep up cleſteſt and ſweeteſt communion with God; the obedient child lyes moſt in his fathers boſom, *1 Job. 1. 6. If we ſay we have fellowſhip with God and walk in darkneſs, we lye, but verſe 7. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowſhip one with another, God and we; our fellowſhip is with the Father and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt.*

4. You will have cleareſt and fulleſt evidences of your heavenly inheritance, when the eldeſt ſon pleaded, *Luk. 15. 29. That he never tranſgreſſed at any time the commandment*

ment of his father : presently the reply of the father is, *All that I have is thine*, and when David feasted the wayfaring man with *Uriahs* Ew-lambe, the joy of his salvation was lost as to the sense and comfort of it, *Psal.* 51. 12.

5. You will live in the nearest resemblance of heaven, which consisteth in a perfection of holiness, glorified souls are termed, *Spirits of just men made perfect*, *Heb.* 12. 23. Hence he expressed himself thus, That if sin stood on the one hand, and hell on the other, he would chooſe hell rather, if it might be without sin, then heaven with sin.

Anſwer.

2. This serious reflection upon what the Lord hath done for you, will be of excellent use to *keep your souls cleave with God, it will work your hearts into a steady frame*, and sure, you will live best to your selves, when your hearts are most fixed upon God, and most fixed for God; it is a singular mercy to beſtanding Chriſtians in falling times : this ſtability of ſpirit is much valued by God, and receives much in way of ſpiritual incomes from God, *Apoc.* 3. 7. to the 13. the contrary is much diſliked by the Lord, *Pſal.* 78. 8. the people of Iſrael are charged with this crime, *that they ſet not their heart aright, and that their ſpirit was not ſtedfaſt with God, and verſ. 9. The children of Ephraim being armed and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battail; bewraying their falſe-heartedneſs to and ſaint-heartedneſs in the Lords quarrel* : Ah how is the Scripture ſadly made good in our days ! We have hearts bent to back-ſliding, revolting ſpirits from the truths, ways, and cauſe of the Lord Jeſus : though the Lord hath opened his Goſpel-Magazine amongſt us, given forth his ſpiritual armor in all the pieces of it, furniſhed us with a gallant train of Artillery, formed us into compleat bodies, put us under the conducts of ſkilful leaders, given us the advantage of winde and hill, and the ark of his preſence hath marched in the miſt of us ; yet what diſhonorable retreat have many of us made ? how have we flung down our Arms, and forſooke our

our standard in the day of battel? nay, how have we been like a routed Army, scattered here and there into small parties, and all endeavors as yet, prevail not to rally us again? what a full comment is *England* upon, and how parallel unto that *Eze. 34. 5, 6. They were scattered, and became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered: my sheep wandered upon every mountain, and upon every high bill: let us make a little stay and gather up some observations: As,*

1. That the word of God is the walk of Christs sheep, the Scriptures of truth set boundaries to their Pastures.

2. Every departure from the word in judgement or practice is an aberration; the sheep that seek pasture beyond the bound of Scripture are stragglers.

3. That the sheep of Christ, especially the fat and luscious of them, are apt to wander; to go beyond their bounds, and in somethings, to depart from their flock and fold, but I would not be mistaken, as though I interpret the departure of conscientious Christians, from the common road of carnal Gospeling, or from the foot track of formal profession; nor yet their declining communion with the whole rout of professors at large in that peculiar Ordinance of the Supper; to be a departure from the flock and fold of Christ; for, in this their breathing after Gospel-purity, they walk agreeably to a Gospel-rule; but when a people run into destructive errors, and take up opinions or practices, inconsistent with the truth and holiness of the Gospel; this I call a wandering from the flock and fold of Christ.

4. When sheep begin to wander, and are got out of their usual walk, so inobservant are they, that they straggle over all mountains and hills, and know nowhere to stay, nor how to return home again, how sadly and how often hath this been evidenced in our days? what errors new or old have not been taken up and entertained by some of the Nation? how have some wandered from mountain to hill, and knew not where to sit down? and how far have they straggled out of their knowledge, that they knew not how to get back again?

5. That

one Hive,
Mt. Vines.

1 Cor. 5. 11.
Cha. 10. 16,
17.

5. That wandering sheep become meat to every beatt of prey; single sheep and silly sheep, when they are from under the care and overights of their keepers can hardly save themselves by flight or fight from the evening wolves; how suddainly have many been caught in our days, *Joh. 15. 6.*

6. That there are many beasts of prey, which lay wait for wandering sheep to devour them; Foxes and Wolves have been always stirring, and are not many now a days? Wolves in sheeps cloathing, who have cunningly drest up their opinions with such an Evangelical trimming, that nothing of the Wolf appears, even to them which hold him by the ears.

7. That it is much blame-worthy in shepherds, when they suffer their sheep to go astray, and run themselves into danger: the Lord chargeth high, as a piece of great unfaithfulness in the over-seers of his flock, when through their default his sheep do straggle, and become a prey to the beast of the field: you may hear him expressing himself in words of greatest distast. *Ezek. 34. 10. Thus saith the Lord God Adonai Jehovah, or Jehovah who is your Lord, behold I am against the shepherds, and I will require my flock at their hands, and cause them to cease feeding my flock: tis known to most, that in Scripture-language, Magistrates and Ministers are termed shepherds, and have in their respective capacities, a joint oversight of the flock committed unto them by the chief shepherd; but alas! how have ye Magistrates shuffed off the care of the flock to the Ministers? and how have the Ministers shifted back the oversight of it to the Magistrates? and betwixt them both, many sheep have wandered, and some have been worried: Though most were desirous that the Foxes should be taken, yet it came under dispute, who should take them; and though at all hands it was agreed, that deceiving *Jehozabab* should be dealt withal, yet how and by whom, hath hitherto been the question: Ask the Magistrate and he will tell you Ministers must do it by the sword of the spirit: and ask the*

the Minister and he will tell you that the Magistrate must do it by the sword of his civil power : And whilst we have been disputing what to do, and who should do it, errors have sadly spread, and a considerable part of the flock hath straggled, and is become a prey to the beasts of the field : the blame whereof is laid by some at the Magistrate's door, upon account of his tenderness and gentleness of spirit, and countenance to such as differed only in disciplinary points, refusing to establish by his civil sanction, that way of discipline, as universal and imposing upon all, which they own, and would enthroned as the government of the Lord Jesus : as also for their remissions, and too much indulgence to evil persons and opinions, in not punishing the one nor suppressing the other, which amounteth to a toleration : And many charge the blame hereof upon the Ministry, by reason of morose, austere, and rigid carriage toward those, who differ from them in the way of discipline, or only in some lesser doctrines, that are not fundamental ; or because they remit much of that care, watchfulness and oversight, which the duty of their places, and the present necessity obliged them unto, but the day will declare it : and tis not good for either to plead not guilty : the Lord help us to mourn, that the folds are broken up, and that the flocks are scattered : The Lord teach us all our duty, and by his own spirit in the word, determine that great question, what is to be done, and by whom ; *That the sick may be healed, the broken bound up, the lost may be sought up, those that are driven away may be brought again, and the residue secured against future scattering* : And the Lord give stability of spirit to his people, that they may be kept from toppling in these tottering times, when so many backslide, some in profession not in opinion, some in opinion who yet retain a profession, and some in opinion and profession both, stepping into Religion without any precedent and inward change, and so soon in, soon out ; making that good *1 John 2.19. They went out from us because they were not of us* : And now, you will finde, upon due

due trial, this an excellent means to fix your spirits, when you read upon those acts of grace, which the Lord hath drawn out upon your hearts in the blood of his own Son : How did this fix the Apostles, *Job. 6. 67. Many of the disciples went back, and walked no more with the Lord Jesus*, upon which he puts the question to them, *will ye also forsake me ?* there was need of such a question : for, *Nemo errat sibi-ipsi, sed dementiam spargit in proximis*, the heathen could say, no man errs to himself, but evil men and erring, do spread their madness unto their neighbors ; as weeds endanger the good corn, bad humors the good blood, and an infected house the whole neighborhood ; Therefore the Lord Jesus tries their pulses, whether this great defection had not tainted them with some infection ; and behold the fixeness of their spirits in Peters reply, *Lord to whom shall we go ? thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God ;* we have certainly and experimentally known, by those glorious works which thou hast wrought before us, and by the saving communication of thy grace, and light untous, when we were in a dark and dead estate, that thou art Christ the Son of the living God, and therefore we will not leave thee : this cemented and knit their hearts unto Christ : it was a brave speech of old *Polycarpus*, when the Proconsul persuaded him to deny the Lord Jesus, *Eighty and six years have I served Christ and he never did me hurt but good, and shall I now deny him ?* Oh ! abster, God forbid, Thus Saint Paul argues back the *Galathians*, *Gal. 3. 1, 2. O foolish Galathians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you ? This only would I learn of you, received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith, &c ?* Oh did ye much and often read over the pages of divine love unto you, and would be true to your own experiences, it would antidote you against many errors of the times, and keep your hearts close with God.

3. This

Seneca.

ἐγνώκεμεν.

See Mr. Baxter in loc.

3. This serious recognition and review of the Lords mercies, *brings most comfort unto the soul*; and sure he lives best to himself, who lives most to his own comfort, a life of comfort is the sweetness, the desirableness, and life of life, *What is life to the bitter in soul? which long for death, and dig for it more then for hid treasures? which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they finde the grave*, Job 3. 21, 22, 23. And what comfort have men in living (upon a natural account) *when those dayes are come, wherein they say, we have no pleasure in them*, Eccl. 12. ver. 1. and is it not so in a spirituall sence? a wounded spirit who can bear, but a good conscience is a continual feast, and the Kingdom of God is *righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. 14. ver. 17. Then do we come nearest heaven, and live in the suburbs of it, when we are filled with peace and joy in our soules, when we experience a sedateness and tenicity of spirit, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God: now sence of grace received doth marvellously comfort the soul.

1. In our addressments unto God by prayer, when we have any request to make at the throne of grace, this will work a *πρόσβασις*, and holy boldness of spirit in us, we may encourage our selves to hope, that we shall speed in our desires, and have acceptation in heaven, when we consider that God hath manifested the love of a father, and given the portion of a childe unto us; how he sought us up when we were gone astray, met us with a welcome home at our returne, and clasped us in the embraces of his paternall affections; when we have the robe and ring to shew the spirit of Adoption which cryeth Abba, Father, and therefore if parents that are evil know how to give good things to their children, much more will our heavenly father give the holy Ghost to us that ask him, Luke vers. 11. *11. vers. 13. even αγαπάει --- good things*, yea, all good things, for the Holy Ghost, is a comprehensive and superlative terme; all good things, and that which is more then all besides; sure, we should not have that listlessness and loathness unto prayer, that heart-deadness in prayer, and

Aa

See Mr. Tappin's Sermon on this Text, in *Martins* 7. Luke vers. 11.

and those dead hopes, as to expediency of comfort from prayer, if we were much and often in the meditation of Gods love; Oh tis an excellent heart preparatory unto prayer and the readiest way to find the **returnes** of our prayers: while prayer standeth still, the trade of Godliness stands still also, and soul-wants are great and many; all good comes into the soul by this door, and all true treasures by this Merchants ship: And sure, they who have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water, that have the fence of justifying and sanctifying grace, have boldness and heart-willingsness, to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, and may draw near to God with full assurance of faith, *Heb. 10. ver. 19, 22.* in which the life of comfort doth much consist, and by which it is much preserved in the soul.

2. This heart-commanding will give you comfort in your attendance at the posts of widome, O when you sit at the feet of Jesus in his teaching ordinances, and your hearts are heated and heightened with a serious meditation upon the truth and work of grace, you'l taste comfort in every word, and draw sweetness out of every drop, if sin be roundly dealt withall, and the arrows of the Lord be keen to strike through the very heart of a lust, you will rejoyce in it, because 'tis done against an enemy: sin and you are now implacably fallen out, and therefore, you dare speak in the words of the Psalmist, *Psal. 139. ver. 21, 22. Do not I hate them which hate thee? and am not I grieved with them which rise up against thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies:* Indeed, in a sense, we are to love our enemies but those that would draw off our hearts from the Lord and loosen our affections from holiness, as sin would; Oh they are enemies indeed; and we shall bless God, when the word wounds them deepest, that they bleed and breath out their last. Time was, when we had secret heart-risings against the word, when a reproof came

*Care his
Plus est
Deo quam
hominibus
legitur.*

came too close, and *Abab*-like we have hated the *Micah*, and have gone home to our houses heavy and displeased, because of the word which hath been spoken unto us, *1 Kings 21. 2. 3. 4. 1.* but now we take pleasure in a sin-wounding sermon, a lust-laming discourse, when the word gets a leg or an arm from the body of death; so when impenitency is reprov'd, and sentenced, we shall be comforted, when we find that God hath given us soft hearts, and granted repentance unto life, *Acts 11. verse 18. --* If Gospel unbelief be threatened, and the wrath of an eternal God denounced, our hearts will be comforted by a reflection upon our faith, of which *Jesus Christ* hath been the Author, and will be the finisher, *Heb. 12. ver. 2.* nay, if the bottomless pit be opened, and a vision of that brimstone-lake, belching forth smoke, and sulphur, be presented, the sight whereof makes the sinners of *Zion* afraid, and surpriseth the hypocrites, with sinking fears, crying out in the greatness of their distress, *who amongst us shall dwell with devouring fire? who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* *Isa. 33. ver. 14.* our hearts will feed upon this sad truth, with comfort, when we know, that with *Noah* we are in the ark, and with *Lot* we are in *Zoar*, waiting for our *Jesus* from heaven, *who hath delivered us from wrath to come,* *1 Thes. 1. ver. ult.* The Devil is called *αὐτὸς ὁ δράκων*, a roaring lion, roaring after the prey; but our comfort is, that the Lord *Jesus* is *αὐτὸς ὁ φύλαξ*, the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, which rescueth us from the paws of this Lion: Nay farther, if Gospel privileges be displayed, Gospel-promises be apply'd, Gospel-treasures be opened, and the name of Christ like oymment be powred forth, we may by an Act of believing grasp at all, and say, *all is ours, we are Christs,* *1 Cor. 3. ver. ult. yea Christ is ours,* *Can. 5. ver. ult.* In a word, if the state of after blessedness be discovered upon, and heaven in all its glory be revealed, according to frail man's utmost capacity, to apprehend it, On it will be matter of heart-rejoycing to us, when our souls can go up to God with that triumphanc Eulogy, *1 Pet. 1. ver.*

ver. 34. 5. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to this inheritance: incorruptible, and undefiled, and which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation, in every truth, the fence of grace received, will give in comfort to a believer; Oh try this, and you will find a sweetness in the word however dispensed; This also will render your approaches to the Lord's Table, more acceptable to the Lord, and more comfortable to your own souls; for having tried the truth, and coming in the fence of grace received, you may lift up your hearts with cheerfulness, and humbly expect, that the cup is the new Testament in the blood of Jesus, for the remission of your sins, Matth. 26. v. 28. that all the benefits of the new Covenant, even the whole purchase of Christ's passion, are sealed up unto you; if, to this worthiness of person, you add the worthiness of preparation also, *You shall then find his flesh to be meat indeed, and his blood to be drink indeed*; as living men, and of sound constitutions find favour and nourishment from their food they take, when the dead find none, and distempered persons, but little; so shall you finde food and growth in that ordinance, when 'tis *wor. in Isa*, the favour of death unto death, to the dead Formalist, and gives forth little sweetness, or favour to the senseless and sleepy Christian; Oh then, as *Deborah* be awake herself *Judg. 5. ver. 12. Awake, Awake Deborah*, to say I, *Awake*, awake up your glory in thankfulness to the Lord, stirre up your selves, and graces, lean by faith upon the blessed bosome of your Jesus, cleave to his Cross, and ye shall *suck honey out of this rock, ye ayl out of this flintie rock*, Deut. 32. v. 13. and thus commemorating the death of Christ, by those lively remembrances of his death, you may lift up your hearts with comfort, to *look for, and love his appearing*.*

4. This serious revival of formal incomes and experiences from the God of all grace, in ways of grace to your

your souls, will up-heap your hearts with lively and lasting consolations in every estate; it is like the Woolf, which will draw a thread of comfort, through the whole warp of a Christians life; as might be cleared in many instances; to name a few---

1. Are you under breaking afflictions from the Lord in your persons or families? doth deep call unto deep? and are the banks of custodient providence, so broken down, that all his waves and billows do flow over you? why, what comfort and reviving will the sense of grace received bring into your souls? when you minde that witness within you, that you are the children of God, you may look upon all your afflictions as the rod of a Father, and his end in all to be *the taking away of sin*, Isa. 27.9. not by satisfaction (for thats the peculiar fruit of your Redeemers blood) but by sanctification, wisely governing his corrections, *To beat down the body, and bring it into subjection to the government of the Lord Jesus*, grace received will light a candle unto you, whereby you may read the minde of God, and the methods of his paternal discipline, *Het. 12. 6. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth*; that son in whom he is well-pleased, says Mercer in *Prov. 3. 12.* the lower the ebbe, the higher the tyde; the lower you descend in humiliation, 1 *Chron. 4. 9, 10. The Holy Ghost says, Jabez was more honourable then his brethren, and his mother called his name Jabez, because I bore him with sorrow: Jabez signifies sorrow, and wherein did his honor appear? why, in that God granted him his requests*, viz. blessed him, enlarged his coast, strengthened him by his hand and kept him from evil: thus in a spiritual sense, an afflicted Saint is a *Jabez*, not onely as a man of sorrow, but as an honourable person, the rod is a pledge of love and badge of honour, *he sunt gemme & pretiosa ornamenta Dei*, says one pointing to his sores and ulcers, These are the gems and jewels wherewith God decketh his best friends: *The Lord hath prepared me a neck-lace of pearl*, was the saying of a gracious woman, when a sickness took hold upon her: the

*unwieldy,
clubb down
1 Cor. 9. 27.*

the Lily is sown in her own tears, *And Gods vines* (says one) *lean the better for bleeding*, there may be a plethora of blood, as well as superfluous branches, which may hinder fruitfulness: these are the preludes of your everlasting triumphs, and as your constancy in them doth witness your love to God; to your support under them Omnis Christi doth witness Gods love to you, which begins with the cross here, but shall end with the crown hereafter, Jam. 1-12. *Blessed is the man which endureth temptation* (from the Lord in ways of afflictions) *for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of glory, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

2. Are you under the buffetings of Satan? do his fiery darts fly about you? and doth he fire his granado's upon you? may do principalities and powers, worldly Governors, and spiritual wickednesses draw up against you, and that *in heavenly places*? namely, to take away your crown from you, to plunder you of your joy and peace here, and to block up your way to heaven hereafter? Why, follow the streams to the head of the fountain; endeavour to work up your hearts to a serious apprehension of grace received in the life and sense thereof, and you will receive much contribution from it, as to your peace and safety; though Satan may beat you from your outworks, and seize upon some of your Artillery, and thereby discourage, yea, much discompose you in your addresses to God, yet the consideration of pardoning, purging, adopting and accepting grace, will be a *Fort-Royal*, an impregnable *Citadel*, wherein you may secure the choicest of your heavenly, and from whence you may have reserves in the hottest onsets: the experiences of the goodness, and good pleasure of the grace of God in Jesus Christ unto you, will be *as chariots of fire and horses of fire round about you*, 2 King. 6. 17. to circunvallate and safeguard your souls: The Apostle 1 Pet. 5. 10. tells you, *That Satan triauneth after souls, as an hungry lyon after his prey*, and gives in this way of advice unto you, *vers. 9. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, that is, keep your ground* and

and lift up the shield of faith to receive and quench his fiery darts, by considering.

1. That the same afflictions, that is, temptations, are accomplished in your brethren that dwell in the world, you are not single in this temptation (though that is much the thoughts of tempted ones) Satan doth not fight you with a new weapon, that lately past the forge.

2. That you stand related to, and are in covenant with that God, who is the God of all grace, who hath all weapons ready for war in his Armory and can supply a tempted Saint with those graces, suddenly and fully, which he stands in need of.

3. That your relation to the God of all grace is founded upon Jesus Christ and evidenced by your effectual calling--for you are called into his eternal glory by Jesus Christ--not unto, implying, that grace gives the soul an entrance into glory: effectual vocation is a call from heaven into heaven: the soul is taken up into heaven from the time of its new birth, as to the certainty of it, and safe keeping unto it.

4. That your suffering condition will not be long, it is the Lord not Satan, who times your temptations; you shall suffer but a while: sharpe they are and therefore termed sufferings, yet but short, therefore phrased awhile, hence *Rev. 2. 10. You shall have tribulation ten dayes*, that is, your imprisonment shall be short.

5. That your temptations shall be in order to your establishment; the God of all grace, will make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you--your sufferings shall be in order to your settling, your temptation in order to your consolation, parallel to that *2 Cor. 4. 17. Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory*: O then, do but in the hour of temptation, draw up the main body of your experiences, and evidences of Gods love in Christ unto you, and Satan cannot hurt you, though his main battery be against you; though he may pluck of some grapes,



grapes, he shall never destroy your Vintage; though he may pick up some scattered ears, he shall never carry away your harvest; and though he may trouble you in your passage to heaven, he shall never keep you out of heaven: what a day of comfort is this unto the soul!

3. Are you summoned by the King of terrors? do his batteries play upon you? are there breaches made in your mud-walls? is there a mine sprung, and your life in all likelihood to be blown up? Why, the lively sense and evidence of grace received, will like a cordial water, warm your hearts, and stay up your spirits at such an hour as this is, that light of life within you, if heeded, will clear up the counsels of God unto you, as to your after and eternal well-being, it will convince you of Gods sovereignty, conquer your renitency, and make you bow head and heart with much submission to the *father of spirits*; this will ballance and ballast your souls too, and poise them evenly between hope and fear, that neither shall be inordinate, and that in two particulars.

1. Where grace sits at the helm of Government in the soul, it brings the unruly passions into subjection to the divine pleasure and preserves the Saints from over-much hoping of life, *seeing their dayes are determined and their bounds set*, and antidotes them against overmuch fearing of death, *seeing the number of their mouthes are with God*, Job 14. 5, 6. the indefinite is equivalent to an universal, so that it was not *Jobs* single case, but the common lot of all mankind, and therefore you may safely argue, that all the rare feasts which *Paracelsus* professed to do for the lengthening of mens lives, the use of all remedies cannot make you out-live, nor the missing of them cause you to fall short of those bounds, which God in his secret and irreversible decrees hath set you: This consideration will much quiet your hearts in God, when you have the sentence of death within your selves; it will excellently prevent that distemper, *which is an evil that I have*

have seen, even amongst the Saints of God, viz. an over-cager desire of life and a greedy catching at any hopes thereof, even to some neglect of that preparation, and those precedaneous duties, which the seriousness of death and eternity do call for at their hands : not that I condemn a modest and humble desire of life, or a sober use of means and medicines in order thereunto, onely pronounced this, as a cure of that heart-dillemper mentioned, and to periwade myself and others, to say with *David*, *Here I am, let the Lord do to me as seemeth good unto him*, 2 Sam. 15. 26.

2. Your gathering up your experiences of converting, renewing, adopting and accepting grace in Jesus Christ will fill your souls with ravishing comforts upon an everlasting account, even then, when your nearest friends fill your heads with weepings, sighings and sad lamentings, as seeing your dying breath draw faint and short, and other synpromes of death report your change to be very near, you will then gather up your spirits, as *old Jacob did his feet*, and not be afraid to *speack with your enemy in the gate*--the gate of eternity : Oh grace improved, will show you your names written in the *Lambs book of life* ; will give you some foretastes of those joys, which are in the presence of God ; will lead you in a vision of the Spirit, into your fathers house, that you may see those mansion places of glory which are prepared for you ; and will open your eyes that you may see the Angels of God, those blessed ministering spirits, waiting at your pillows, to waite your souls into the everlasting embraces of your dear Redeemer ; that you may say with the Apollle, 2 Cor. 5. 1. (to still the sobbings of your sad relations) *We know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building with God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens* : That with *Moses* you may dye upon the mount Dr. *Kendall* of vision, and with *David* full of riches and honor, in a in his answer spiritual sense : Oh this consideration will make death-tokens, love-tokens and repent death as a messenger *Godwin* n. p. from your dear Jesus, who brings the glad tidings of e- 53.

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verlasting life : if you fall by an arrow, yet is that arrow shot by the hand of God, in more love then *Jobathons was to David*; if by a stroke of the pestilence, yet that pestilence is no Plague, but somewhat-a harsher platter of all miseries : whatever be the fury of the disease, it is but a chariot of fire to carry you to heaven : None of the blessed Fathers ever complained of the untowardness of the way ; so happy are they, in being seized of their inheritance among the Saints in light, though they were hurried thither through the darkest valley of the shaddow of death : Thus that learned Author.

O friends, mind the anointings of the Spirit, the sealings of the Spirit, the witness of the Spirit, and draw up a fair Copy of all the gracious visits, actions, and workings of your blessed Redeemer, by his Spirit, unto, and upon your hearts, that your souls may often read therein, that so when you come to die, as needs you must, *and be as water spilt upon the ground, which can be gathered up no more*, you may then be set down in the *valley of Achor* ; nay, may finde the valley of the shadow, of death, *as the valley of Barabba* ; God hath pluckt out the sting of death, and so death is given-as a favour unto you : O read your own blessedness in the light and print of the Spirit, *Apoc. 14. 13. Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them*. A Christian, says one, is here like quick-silver, which hath in it a principle of motion not of rest, never quiet, like a ball upon the rackets, a ship upon the waves, but death brings him to his rest, his body to the grave, which is his bed of rest, *Ila. 57. 2.* and his soul into *Abrahams bosom* ; *That rest which remains to the people of God, Heb. 4. 9. And your works shall follow you ; mors privata potest pius, non operibus*, death doth strip a Saint of his wealth, not of his works ; there shall be a resurrection of your prayers, and piety, yea honorable mention will be made of your charity to the poor Saints, at the great day, *Mat. 25. 35. I*

*and rest, in a-
mors ab ipso
moris aris-
culo.
Mr. Trapp in
locum.*

was an hungry and ye fed me, &c. Oh comfort your hearts with these considerations, duly weighing what ye have read, and you will find, when you live most in a lively sense of grace received, and in the improvement of it, you live best to yourself, as to a greater freedom from sin, a closer walking with God, and living a life of great comfort.

3. A sober and favourably collection of grace received, will make you live best to others, *No man is born to himself*, says the heathen, *and no man liveth to himself* says the *b. ly Ghost*, Rom. 14-5. he is a monster in nature that centers only upon himself, and is fitter to dwell like an *Anchoret* in a Cell, or like a *leper* apart, then in a community with men and Christians; as there is a circulation of the blood in natural bodies, that every part may receive warmth and spirits to supply its want, and to render it serviceable to the whole: So ought there to be a circulation of gifts and graces in the body mystical, upon spiritual accounts; therefore says the *Apottle*, *We that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak*, cither bear with them, or bear up the infirm and weak Christians, as pillars do the poise of the whole house, or parents bear their babes in their arms, *and not to please our selves*, that is not to live onely in a way of self-pleasing, as men acted by principles of self-love, but *vers. 2. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification, for even Christ pleased not himself*: The end of Christs coming into the world, was not to seek great things for himself, upon a carnal and self-pleasing score; nay though the cup and cross were displeasing unto him, as man, and he prayed against them, yet when he considered, that the will of his father was to bring many sons unto glory, and that by making the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings, he presently submitted, and said, *not my will, but thine be done*: Here's our pattern in the pursuance of others good; *our lives should be as so many Sermons on the life of Christ*, as one faith; this is to walk as Christ walked, and this will give boldness in the day of

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Judgment : Now, we shall best seek our neighbours good, to edification, when we keep up a fence of our own wants and weaknesses, supplies and succours, we shall thereby be like the good Scribe, *Matth. 13. ver. 52. which is intruded to the kingdom of heaven, who hath things new and old in his treasury*, to bring forth upon every occasion : The *Rabbins* Proverb is, *Lilmed, le-lammed*, Learn, that ye may teach ; and the Scribe, *enlèxe, extrudit copiose & alacriter*, freely and fully gives forth his store to the needy hearer : Christians, as well as Ministers, must be like full paps, which pain the nurse with their fulness, and therefore draw them out to their babes, that they may be drawn ; or like *Aromatical trees, which sweat out their sovereign gummies and oyls* : But alas ! how few such sweating trees grow upon *English* ground ; how many dry breasts have we every where ? and those that are full have sore nibbles, that will not give suck because of the painfulness in drawing ? Truly, when I observed this great evil amongst the Christians of our age and Nation, I was pressed in spirit to provoke unto love and good works, and to publish my thoughts by way of brotherly advice unto them, that a wise and faithful improvement of our own cases and graces, would excellently advantage the good of our neighbours : I shall instance, in some Particulars.

1. Your own experiences faithfully communicated will marvelously encourage young Converts, they will be as a staff in the hand of the weak, whereon to stay : New beginners have many fears and pull-backs at their first setting forth for heaven ; many adversaries that do way-lay them, and many enemies that do pursue them ; *Egypt* at the red sea, and *Amaleck* in the wilderness : Satan levies all his temptation, to render the seed of grace abortive in their souls, so that it would bring forth fruit to perfection, at a slow rate, if the Lord Jesus, who planted it, did not also water, and preserve it, and that every moment, *Ila. 27. vers. 3.* Besides, when the Lord gives a converted sinner a vision of himself, lets him see his

Mr. Trap.
in Mat. 13.
52.

his own vileness, the heaps of sin and lust, the springs and fountains of corruption in his nature; how he lies under the guilt of black and horrid sins, open to the wrath of an Almighty and sin-revenging God, and ready to drop into the grave and hell, out of which there is no recovery: Oh the fears that are upon his spirit! the dismal thoughts that roll up and down his mind, the dreadful found that is in his ears! but now, if you that are Christians of some standing in the grace of God, would impart your experiences, and tell him, what your fears, and troubles, and how the Lord gave you in comfort and establishment; sure, this would mightily encourage a young convert, and have a special influx to his peace, quietness, and consolation! This was the Apostle Paul's way, 1 Tim. i. ver. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; That is the Doctrinal part, which indeed flows with much comfort into the heart of an humble believing sinner; as Mr. Biley, Martyr, found in a great conflict: But now the Ap- plicatory part gultheth out with streams of comfort; and what's that? of whom I am chief; bowbeit I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them, which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting; as if he had said, One great reason (next to the secret purpose of his own free grace) why this grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was so exceeding abundant towards me, even to a pleonasm of mercy, was, that I might be held forth, as a pattern of free grace, as a monument of pardoning and sparing mercy to all sin-laden and sin-loathing persons (who are the true Penitents): Oh how would a wounded spirit, yet healing, a broken heart binding, and a drooping soul reviving from such discoveries of misery and mercy, of guilt and grace, sin and salvation! there would not be such sinking of spirit, neither would the wounds of many be so long, raw, and bleeding, if experienced Christians would be free in communicating their conditions and comforts unto*

unto them, and would, like the good Samaritan, pour in the wine and oyl of their experienced mercy.

2. This would be a mighty support to weak believers, the experiences of stronger Christians, rightly imparted, and improved, will exceeding buttress up their faith; alas! when God first opens their eyes, they see men walking afar off, as trees, they have but imperfect apprehensions of Gospel depths: Godliness is so great a Mystery; the work of Redemption in all its causalities, concurrences, and qualifications, is so mysterious, wrap up so much in the glory of divine wisdom, held forth under such seeming impossibilities to carnal reason, and contradictions to corrupt nature, that they are ready to cry out, *How can these things be?* John 3, vers. 4. *And if these things be so, who then can be saved?* Luke 18. vers. 26. and are afraid to give assent unto those deep Mysteries, as the truths of God; but when the Lord hath helped them over these doubts and difficulties, that they set their seal to the Gospel, as spoken by the Lord, and confirmed by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness, with signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will, Heb. 2. 35. 4. so that they do willingly embrace this so great salvation; yet alas! the greatest work of faith is behind, and that is to live upon the promises, to appropriate Jesus Christ, to put on Christ, to believe that he is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and redemption, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *Christus vivit*, Christ liveth was Luthers motto, and Christ liveth in me, loveth me, and gave himself for me, is the language of true faith, Gal. 2. 20. true faith individuateth Christ, and appropriateth him to a mans self, this is the pith and power of particular faith: But ah! how long doth many a poor soull yce upon the bankes of *Jordan*, before he can waite over to the land of *Canaan*: Some of the Saints have many a hard pull for faith; they are faine to tug hard with fears and doubtings; sometimes faith is up and fear down; sometimes fear is up and faith is down. Why now, if strong believers, who have the work of faith

fulfilled

*Nunquam
natura
mutabit sic
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ut virgo p.
veret, nec
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Mr. Trap, in
Gal. 2. v. 20.

fulfilled in their hearts with some power, 2 Theff. 1. 11. who have passed through the several stages of fear and faith, and have found those very fears and troubles in their own souls; if such *would receive the weak in faith affectu charitatis*, into the bosome and embracement of Christian love, not making them *question-sick by doubtful disputations*, Rom. 14. 1. but deal tenderly and gently with them, and give them a free and full account of their former fears and present faith, recounting their experiences, how, and in what methods, the Lord hath given them an establishment in the faith; sure, it would much conduce, through the grace and blessing of God, to the quieting, strengthening, and confirming of weak believers: suppose I should labor under a distemper, which in its nature and to some is mortal, and a friend tells me, he hath had the same disease in the same height, and accompanied with the same pains, and that in the use of such and such means, he had cure, and now is a healthy man; though I cannot be recovered by such a narrative, yet I am persuaded to use those medicines, and am raised up to an expectancy of cure in the right use of them: So when a believer, who hath been upon the rack of fears and diffidences, comes to a doubting Christian, that is torn in peices as it were, with them, and whose spirit even sinks within him, and tells him, that it was so with him, that he wrestled long with discouragements, and in a pet of unbelief was ready to throw up all, crying out, all men are liars; that notwithstanding, what this Prophet and that Apostle, this Preacher, and that Preacher hath said, I shall perish in my sins, and be a cast-away to all Eternity, and that then, the Lord came in, led him by the hand of his spirit, to this and that Promise; shewed him the *sealed fountain open*, Zech. 13. *vers. 1.* the bloud of Christ, as a fountain, therefore full, and as open, therefore free, both to pardon sin, and purge uncleanness, and that now, *he is justified by faith, and hath peace with God through Jesus Christ*, Rom. 5. *vers. 1.* yea, joy in God, through Jesus Christ, by whom he hath

hath now received the attonement, *vers. 10.* Thou I say, a believer cannot spare any oyl, out of his own vessel, to supply the want of another with, nor work faith in his heart, (that being the peculiar work of the Lord Jesus, *Heb. 12. ver. 2.*) yet such discoveries as these will mightily raise up the heart of a sinking Christian, and beget in him a hopefull expectancy of faith, in this evidence of it ; however he brings him up to the Conclusion, *To fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his servant, yea, though he walk in darkness, and sees no light, yet to trust in the Lord, and stay upon his God, Isa. 50. vers. 10.* And thus is his soul quieted in this recumbent act of Faith, untill the day dawn, and the day star arise in his heart.

You will live best to others, when, in the sense and evidence of Grace received, you communicate your experiences, by way of comfort, unto others, in these 4 particular cases ;

1. In the black day of Persecution.
2. In the sad hour of Temptation.
3. In the dark night of spirituall desertion.

4. In the bewailed want of the Spirits witness to Son-ship and salvation : which cases the Saints of God do usually meet withal, whilst they are *at home in the body*, and in the Apostles sense, *absent from the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. ver. 6.*

1. You that are experienced Christians may much underprop a timorous and faint-hearted Professour in dayes of Persecution ; when his fears are great, his dangers many, and his courage low : Have you not heard a servant of the Lord, sadly speaking this Language, I expect every hour an Apparitour, or Pursuivant, to fetch me to the Court or Counsel ; But I fear I shall wrong the cause and Gospel of Jesus Christ, in that I shall not be able to give an answer to them that ask me, *a reason of the hope that is in me, 1 Pet. 3. ver. 15.* nor repel the subtil arguments, which will be drawn up against the Truth, and thereby shall bring shame upon my

my self, reproach upon Religion, and dishonour to the Lord Jesus. Now if an experienced Christian shall reply, Is this thy fear? do such thoughts as these sadden thy spirit? come, cheer up man; this is a path that I have trodden; I have been called out to bear witness to the truth, before as learned subtil Inquisitors as these be, and was under much trouble what to say, and how to answer, being then low in knowledg, and weak in judgments, but I found that promise made good unto me, *Luke 21. ver. 15. I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist*; I was supplied from on high both with Invention and Elocution, that I might say with *Luther, Nescio unde veniat iste meditatio*; I know not whence those Arguments, Answers, and Objections came; but sure, it was the Spirit of my Father which spake in me, and the Promise is universal, to all the Saints, when brought to a day of trial; How bravely did *Anne Aque, Alice Driver*, and other poor women, answer the Doctours, and put them to a *nonplus*? Fear not then, *For it shall be given you in that same hour, what you shall speak*, *Matth. 10. vers. 19.*

A Second Complaint of a poor Christian is this; I have wife and children to take care for, my heart goes out exceeding much unto them, it goes very near me, to bring them into an estate of want and povertie; and therefore I much fear, that I shall grudge exceedingly to suffer a confiscation of mine Estate for conscience sake. I shall be loath to draw up mine own will in mine own blood, and give away all mine Estate from my dear relations, that strangers shall inherit my labours, and the children of mine own body shall be turned out of doors: a sad tryal! enough to dash those generous spirits of the Gospel, in that heart, where flesh and blood are consulted with: But now if an experienced believer shall take him to task, and tell him in the word of faithfulness; O friend, this was my case; I had a fair inheritance descended upon me, had much improved it by

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my care and industry, God gave me a fruitfull vine, with many Olive branches round about my Table, which made my heart full loath to forsake all, and to follow Christ; it cut me to the heart to think, that, for Religion and conscience sake, I should be cruel to mine own flesh, and make void their title to any, who, by the Law of nature, and nations, have a right unto all; but through the good hand of my God, when I was called to it; I was crucified to the world, and the world was crucified to me; the Lord had so taken the world out of my heart, and fill'd it so much with heaven, and drawn up my relations to that height of self-denial, that they spake to me the words of *Origen* to his Father *Leonides* (who suffered in the fifth Persecution) *Cave tibi, ne quid propter & Mon. vol. nos alind quam martyrii constanti facienda propositum cogites; i. pag. 70.* Beware, lest for our sakes, and out of principles of love to us, you take up any other resolution, then what becomes a faithfull martyr, and confessor of the Lord Jesus; so that I was able to take joyfully the spoiling of my goods, knowing that in heaven I had a better and more enduring substance, Heb. 10. ver. 34. and to trust my self and family in the hands of that Jesus Christ, who hath given this assurance to every one, that hath forsaken houses or lands, for his name sake, that he shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit eternal life Matth. 19. ver. 29. and to take his word, who hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, Heb. 13. vers. 5. --- and blessed be his name, I have found much of this made good by my own experience; I have not lost by that, which I lost for Christ: *Queen Elizabeth* would not have wished her self a Milkmaid, when imprisoned for the Gospel sake, if she had foreknown, what a happy Reign of four and forty years the Lord had reserved her unto.

3. But a third Complaint (which, as the great deep, swallows up the two first) of a poor Christian is this; though I should not have much to lose, or the Lord should give me a heart willingly to lose it for the Gospel sake, yet I am afraid I shall never burn for Christ, when

Julian the Apostate put *Valentinian* out of the Tribune-ship for his Religion, who afterwards had the Empire cast upon him.

Mr. Fox, A. & C. referred in the fifth Persecution) *Cave tibi, ne quid propter & Mon. vol. nos alind quam martyrii constanti facienda propositum cogites; i. pag. 70.*

when I come to the stake, I shall prove a wretched Apostle, and shall be farre from the courage of that brave Martyr Bishop Hooper, who, being brought to the stake, at Gloucester, a box with a pardon in it was set before him, Mr. Clark > which when he knew, he cryed out, *If you love my soul, away with it; if you love my soul, away with it*: Oh! great > *trium.* have been the fears of many in times of persecution: But now when an experimental Christian *shall say unto the fearful, Be strong*: Let not the sight of fire and faggot daunt thee: Just thus it was with me, I verily feared, that the sight of a stake made ready with fire and faggot for me, would have made me run out of my wits, and Religion too, and yielded to a base compliance, to have saved this carcass: But I blefs the Lord, when I was haled to the prison, dragg'd to the dungeon, and threatened with a tormenting death, unless I would *receive the mark of the beast, and worship the whore*; I then found the incomes of the spirit so plentifully, received such an Heroick faith, in so high a measure, and was so fraught with Christian magnanimity, that I am humbly bold to persuade my self, (had I then been call'd to it) I should have suffered Martyrdome with much cheerfulness, and comfort, I had that set upon my heart, which was upon Mr. Bilney's, who being told, that fire was very hot, replied, I know it, having often tryed it, by putting my finger into the flame of a candle; yet I am perfwaded by Gods holy word, and the experience of some spoken of in it, that, in the flame they felt no heat, and in the fire no consumption; and I believe, that though the stubble of my body be consumed, yet my soul shall be purged thereby, and after short pain, will be in joy unspeakable. — I believed that Promise, *Isa. 44. v. 2. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee*: doubtless, if this course was duely observed, the people of the Lord would be better prepared for a day of suffering: How did the Primitive Martyrs, and our *Marian* Sufferers comfort and encourage one another against the day of slaughter?

And certainly, the Christians of our time, would best live to their weak Brethren, if, by communicating their experiences unto them, they would endeavour to prepare them for a suffering time, not knowing, but the Lord may call some of us unto it.

You that are experienced Christians may shew much kindness, by way of comfort unto tempted ones, if you would impart unto them the goodness of the Lord, and the succours from an high, which you have found in an hour of temptation; if you would give your hearts a vent, and pour forth your experiences into their bosoms; Oh, nothing more usual then to have Christians tempted; nor, then to hear them under temptations crying out, Never was any poor creature tempted as I am; never had any such buffetings as I have; never were such black lines drawn in any Christians soul, as are in mine; and indeed, Sathau loves to hear them cry out, was ever grief like mine? did ever any feel such terrors and tempests, in their souls, as I do in mine? Surely, *the day of the fierce wrath of the Lord is upon me*, Lam. 1.12. It is the Devils masterpiece of pollicy, to perfwade tempted Saints, that their sorrow is great, that their sorrow is from the Lord, that their great sorrow is from the Lord, in a way of fierce anger, and that it is a none-such calamity; for hereby he perfwades the Saints to hard thoughts of God, and that God hath hard thoughts of them; this he attempted upon *Job*, by making his wife, not a miserable comforter onely, but a miserable counsellor also, when she says, *Job* 2. ver. 9. *Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Dost thou fear God still? love God still? have honourable thoughts of God still? canst thou imagine, that God should send, or suffer all these evils upon thee, and yet love thee, yet bear the good-will of a Father unto thee? surely no, thou puttest a wrong Interpretation upon these sad providences, and therefore answer hatred with hatred, wrath with wrath, revenge with revenge; curse God, let fly in the very face of God; let the world know him to be such a God, as thou findest him to be, a*

Reverend
and learned
Mr. Carey, in
his Lectures
upon this
Scripture
gives us the
several judg-
ment of ex-
positors pag.
275, 276,
277, 278.

harsh

harsh God, an unmercifull God, a cruel Master to his best servants, and an implacable adversary to his best friends.

This seems to be the fence of those words, *curse God*; for *Bereck*, as it signifies bowing the knee, or speaking ill, as, *1 Kings 21. vers. 10*. The false witnesses laid it to *Naboth's* charge, *That he did blaspheme God and the King*, yet the word is, *Berecketh* - from *Bereck*, Thus *Job 1. v. 5*. and *Ver. 11*. the same is used; so that, we need not study Arguments to acquit our Translators of blame, for rendering the word *Curse God*; This reason is given by a learned Explicitor, That the crime of blasphemy was so odious, yea execrable in those dayes, that though the

Hebræws had a proper word to express it by, yet they chose rather to express it by a word, which signifies, to

bleis or praise God: and there is much probability, that this is the fence of the words, because the Law against blasphemy was capital, and punished the offender

with death, *Levit. 24. vers. 15, 16*. *Whosoever curseth his God, shall bear his sin; and he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, for the Law he shall surely be put to death, and all the Congregation shall be judged, certainly stone him; as well the stranger, as the dweller in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall he be put to death*: Now then the advice of *Job's* wife is this, *Mr. Jackson, Curse God, and die*; that is, if thou curst God, the law in the 1 Ch. of blasphemy will reach thee, thou wilt be stoned to death, and so have a speedy cure of all thy sorres and Mr. Caryl's sorrows; Thus Mr. Caryl gives the fence, *page 281*. and and others. better it is to dy painfully, then live miserably: if she Yet then had

had intended a word of counsel unto him, that, notwithstanding all the sad Providences upon him, yet he and light of should bleis and praise God under them, why should the nature, by add, *and die*? this would not have made him culpable punished before man, much less, more provoked God against him: blasphemy and certainly, *Job's* reply clears it up, *vers. 10*. *Thou with death. speakst as one of the foolish women speaketh: Nabal implies as Mr. Caryl. well a wicked person, as a fool, as Psal. 14. 1. Nabal hath said in loc. p. 28. in his heart, there is no God, and sure this person is a fool upon a Religious, and moral as well as a natural account.*

Satan

2. Satan by this means would best reach the end he proposed, and prove the truth of what he had asserted, *chap. 1. 11. Put forth thy hand now and touch all his substance, and he will curse thee to thy face.* So *chap. 2. 5.* Oh the experience of tempted Saints is the best Explicitor of this place; they will tell you, what sharp and sad assaults have been made upon them, and what hard thoughts of God have been injected into them: Oh that this might more caution us, not to entertain any unworthy thought of God, which in its kind is blasphemy, as heart-adultery is adultery. Oh bewail and beware of the Ranters spirit; tis probable he began with an undervaluing thought of God, which was the Serpents head, and then that finding wellcome, as the seed and spawn of an opinion and sect, he wrigled in his whole body and tail also, by bold and blasphemous oaths, curses, and Atheistical conclusions: Ah friends its our wisdom *observe principles*, to stop the first leak that is sprung, to scatter the first puff of this smoak, which riseth from the bottomless pit, lest it gather into such thick clouds about our souls, that it dims our eyes, damps our comforts, and deads our hearts also; and in all our temptations, it would be much our wisdom to consult the experiences of the Lords tried ones; for surely, such may much advance comfort, and much advantage the recovery of tempted ones, if they parallel their condition with their own, and tell them, thus and thus have we been tempted, in all points like unto you, and the Lord stood by us in the day of our trial, and hath *now bruised Satan under our feet, and hath with the temptation made a way to escape*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. we have found, that it is the common lot of all Saints to be tempted, and that God is faithful in his supplies and succors, when they are tempted, and therefore the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of mercies, and God of all comfort, *who hath comforted us in all our tribulation* (through temptation) *hath enabled us to comfort you in these your troubles, by the comfort wherewith we our selves have been comforted of God*, 2 Cor. 1. 3, 4. for as the crosses

so

so the comforts of Saints are parallel, as the decrease of the cure is the same, which experienced grace and succour well applied, will much advance in the hearts of tempted ones.

3. There is a third case wherein experiences imparted and improved would singularly tend to the comfort of others, and that is, in the dark night of spiritual desertion : it is not always clear day with the Saints ; the Sun of righteousness is often clouded, sometimes eclipsed to them : and surely the voyage is very uncomfortable, when for many days together, neither Sun nor Moon, nor Star appear unto them ; it is the presence of God, that giveth light and life unto the soul, and therefore *when God hides his face they are troubled*, Psal. 30. 7. This cast the Spouse into a swooning fit, you may finde her dead up the ground, *Cant. 5. 6. My soul failed*, ceased all vital operation ; and if you inquire into her distemper, what it was that came so near her heart, she will tell you *My beloved hath withdrawn himself and is gone* ; he hath hid himself and I cannot finde him, he hath broke up house and gone ; and if Christ be gone all is gone with her ; she had such panges of love, *such a Paroxysme of conjugal affection*, that the absence of her beloved struck cold to her very heart : just as it was with Micba, Judg. 18. 23, 24. *When the Danites had plundered him of his Priest, his Ephod and his Teraphim, he runs crying after them, and when they said unto him, what ailest thou ? O says he, you have taken away my God, and my Priest, and are gone away : and what have I more ? Alas ! ye have undone me, ye have left me God-less and Priest-less, and what have I more ? All I have left is but lumber, is but as empty caskes ; my estate, my riches, my comfort, my happinels lay in these : So it is with a gracious soul, wife is nothing, children nothing, friends nothing, honor nothing, estate nothing, all nothing, when Christ is gone ; what have I more I say a poor believer ? and if ever poor, now is he so in his own apprehension : Ah ! Christ is so his all, that when Christ is gone (though indeed he is but stepped aside,*

side a little, he loves his unto the end, and therefore never leaves them) all is gone with him ; peace gone, joy gone, comfort gone, hope gone, faith gone, I, and heaven too in his thoughts, and what are all his enjoyments then, but doris & dogs-meat, but trash and lumber? many sad stories may be told on this subject: the bitterness of soul that the Saints have felt in the withdrawals of Christ, hath been exceeding sad : How at such a time as this, if Ministers and Christian friends apply promise after promise, speak comfort in the sweetest and most Evangelical strain that can be, yet no plaister will stick, no cordial will stay, no comfort will be taken ; he will tell you, they are blessed who have a right to promises, but I have none Gospel-privileges are a precious portion, But not to me : they are blessed whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered, but mine is charged ; there is fullness of joy in the presence of God, but I am a cast-out : they are happy indeed that shall spend eternity in heaven, but I shall never come thither : Many expressions of this nature, speaking much distress of soul, and much despair, have saln from the lips of Saints in times of great desertion : If Israel make them a *golden calf*, it is in the absence of *Moses*, and if ever Satan gain upon the Saints, it must be when Christ is withdrawn, he knows that, and therefore he presseth hard upon them at such a time, now I am much persuaded that if an experienced Christian would make an humble and faithful narrative of his own condition to a deserted Saint, and tell him, such hath been my case ; time was when the Lord *bid his face from me*, when the lovingkindnesses of God *were shut up in displeasure against me*, when I had lost all communion with God, all sense of pardoning and accepting grace with God, when I could not pour forth my soul in prayer unto God, and when I had no incomes by way of comfort from God ; though Ministers and Christians spake comfortably unto me, spread the precious truths, promises and privileges of the Gospel before me ; and argued clearly and convincingly concerning my spiritu-
all

all estate, proving by evident demonstrations that I was in a state of grace, a child of God an heir of life, and under the peculiar love of God; though at present the sentence thereof was suspended for a little while: yet such a damp had seized upon my spirit, my soul was so filled with horrors, and such sad apprehensions had I of sin and wrath, that I lay at the very gates of hell; nay so subtle a dispirant was I, being prompted by that old Sophister the devil, that I could frame such arguments, so full of fraud and fallacies, that all my friends could not answer them, and could with that readiness answer all their arguments, that there was none could tell how to oppose me, so that I triumphed, as it were, in that sad victory, that I had baffled all my opponents, and held up the cudgels against all comers: But by the goodness of the Lord, the mist is broke up, the clouds are scattered, the face of God appears again, and I finde joy, and peace, and comfort in my soul: yea the beams of Gods favor shine brighter, and the streams of consolation run more fresh and freely then ever they did; I found that precious promise made good to me, *I sa. 54-7, 8, 9. For a little while have I forsaken thee, but with great compassion will I gather thee, for a moment in mine anger, I hide my face from thee for a little season, but with everlasting mercy have I had compassion on thee, says the Lord thy Redeemer, for this is unto me as the waters of Noah: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be angry with thee, nor rebuke thee; for the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee: And therefore be comforted O thou deserted Saint, the Lord Jesus stands at thy door and knocks; open, open then unto him, and he will come in to thee and sup with thee and thou with him, Rev. 3. 20. There is a table spread, his comforts are dished out, the chairs are all ready set, and I am sent as a messenger from the Lord, to invite thee to this banquet, and to assure thee, in the name of thy dear*

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Jesus,

Jesus, that thou shalt eat many a meal at his table, and thy countenance shall be no more sad, Prov. 12. 25. *Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop, but a good word maketh it glad*: Oh sure! these experiments, as to deflection, and as to consolation, as to the withdrawals, and the returns of Gods favour, would marvellously revive a drooping Saint, and make his stooping heart glad: my reasons are these.

1. Because the methods of God in correcting and comforting his people are the same, their trials and their triumphs are alike; *as face answers face in a glass*, so the condition of one Saint answers another: *There is no new thing under the Sun*; that which is now hath been: there is no temptation happeneth to any, but *what is common to man*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. Yea, the best of men.

2. Because experiments gain much authority with us; we are apt to expect good from a *probatum est*, in order to natural, so to a spiritual cure; *Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?* says the woman to the Samaritanes, Job. 4. 29. and upon this they went out of the City and came unto him; this was the method of Saint John in his first Epistle ch. 1. 1, 3. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the father and with his Son Jesus Christ*.

3. Because God will hereby set a greater mark of honor upon the Saints, and make them with more affectionateness love one another, when they find that the eye hath need of the hand, and the head of the foot, 1 Cor. 12. 21. that they are mutually dependent upon, and mutually serviceable one to another: It is much my thoughts, that in the way proposed, the people of God would be more comforted one by another, and their hearts would be more knit up in love one to another.

4. You will live best to others, when you draw forth the

the sense and experience, which ye have found of the love of God, by way of hope and helpfulness unto those that mourn under the want of the spirits witness to their Son-ship and salvation; with what holy earnestness doth many a servant of the Lord press after assurance? how would he accept of it, as a good bargain indeed, if purchased with the loss of all outward enjoyments? and how is it with many as it was with *Paul*, in another case, *2 Cor. 2. 13. I had not rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother*: Certainty of salvation is this *Titus*, the absence whereof fills the soul with a strange uneasiness, breathing after it in every duty, in every ordinance, in every promise; they are strangers to the prayers and practices, tears and troubles of the Saints, that are ignorant of this. That certainty of salvation is attainable, is a clear truth, *1 Job. 5. 13. These things write I unto you, that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know ye have eternal life, not with the certainty of hope onely (as the Papists say) but of faith also, in the foretastes of after-blessedness, Apoc. 2. 17. To him that overcome will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, with a new name written in it, which no man knoweth, saving he that hath received it*; indeed, this sealing of the holy Spirit of Promise, is a certain divine impression of light, a certain unexpressible assurance that we are the Sons of God; a certain secret manifestation that God hath received us, and put away our sins; I say, says worthy *Dr. Preston*, tis such a thing, which no man knows, but *New Covenant* he that hath received it: it is a wondrous thing, and if *nants* p. 399. there were not some Christians, that do feel it and know it, you might believe that there was no such thing, that it were but a fancy and Enthusiasme; but it is certain that there are a generation of men, which know, what this seal of the Lord is; now then if such as do experimentally know it, and know how they attained unto it, would be but free in their communications, how might they be as faithful guides unto those, *Who ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward*? how might they set up way

way marks for them, and led them by their ports within the view, yea to the suburbs of *heavenly Jerusalem*? telling them, this course we steered, we were much in praying, much in an humble attendance upon Gospel-appointments, much in searching of the Holy Scriptures, much in contesting against all corruptions, much in a due and serious trial of our own spiritual estate, and gave much *diligence to make our calling and election sure, 2 Pet. 1.10. We did not go to the university of election, until we had been at the Grammar-School of vocation* (as one faith) we began below at our sanctification, at the work and truth of grace in our hearts, and so gradually ascended step by step unto the top-stone of our election; we framed a Sill-*gism* of assurance from the *witness of water and blood*, and the Lord at length, superadded the *witness of his spirit*: This we did and blessed be the Lord, we are *sealed with that holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession*, Eph. 1.13,14. and therefore go you and do likewise; pray in hope, wait in hope, and believe in hope, under the persuasion, that *the vision is for an appointed time, but at the end, it shall speak and not lye; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, and will not tarry*, Hab. 2.3. we can set our seal of experience to this truth, though we waited long, yet the vision hath spoken; our souls have heard the speakings of God by his spirit, in peace and joy: and a rejoicing hope of glory to come; and blessed be God it doth not lye, it is not a presumptuous brag, an opinionative boast, which vanisheth into smoke and air in a time of trial; but a real evidence of divine love, and demonstrative assurance of our eternal blessedness: Therefore fear not, ye servants of the Lord, *Who walk in darkness and as yet see no light, light is shown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart*, Psal. 97.11. the seed time is past, and the harveit is drawing on, you shall have your sheaves of joy also, the vision that hath spoke to us, will speak to you also; *Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which bath loved us, and given*

ven in everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, will comfort your hearts and stablish you in every good word and work, 2 Thess. 2. 16, 17. O how may the Saints of God, in all these cases, mutually contribute to the comforting, counselling, supporting, and edifying each other in their *most holy faith*, if they would be free in communicating their experiences to one another, and more frequent in holding up communion one with another: The wise man tells us, *As Iron sharpeneth Iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend*, the point of most Christian zeal is very blunt; they are sharp enough in censures, and contentions, to draw blood of the credit, yea the confidences of their brethren: But what edge would be set upon their zeal in the best sense, and for the best things, if they would often meet together in love, and sharpen each other by holy conferences? may not the neglect of Christian communion rightly managed, be much a cause of our divisions, and animosities? and would it not be a healing means, as to love and union amongst the Saints? would it not procure a right understanding to prevent Schisms and parties? would it not meek the spirits of dissenting brethren? would it not dash those hot vapours, which fly up into the heads of many, and dis Temper their brains with notions and niceties? and may it not through the blessing of God, have an hopeful tendency to the quickening, comforting, confirming, and spiritualizing the Saints, the whole Nation over? *Mal. 3. 16. I ben* (in a time bad enough, and it may be, much worse than ours, whatsoever some men say) *they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was writ before the Lord, for those that feared him and thought upon his name, &c.* What an encouraging practice of the Saints and promise of the Lord is here, to quicken us up to a suitable carriage? we have had much talk of Classical Assemblies, of teaching and ruling Elders to advance the discipline of Christ: O that we might have (bear the word, and blame not the wish) Classical communions of Ministers, and Christians,

lians, to advance the doctrine, and life, and holiness of the Lord Jesus? and that now the Lord hath given all his Churches rest throughout this Nation, we may walk in the fear of the Lord and comfort of the holy Ghost with one lip and one shoulder consulting our mutual edification, and the enlargement of the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus, taking that Primitive practice, *Act. 9.31.* for our pattern; and this gives me a leading hint to offer a fourth consideration unto you, how you may live best unto those that are yet without.

4 You will more advance Religion in your several Towns, and maintain good neighborhood upon the best account, if you lend a word of seasonable advice, to those that are posting to hell, and jogging on, with more haste than good speed, to the *chambers of death*; and thus you will best do, if you speak over unto them, how it hath been with you, how ignorant, how carnal, how earthly-minded, how obstinate, how foolish, and vain you have been; and how you were in the broad way to destruction, yet altogether fenceless and stupid, as to any right apprehension of your danger, or right use of means for your recovery, untill the Lord convinced you by *his spirit of sin, of righteousness and of judgement, Joh. 16.8. granted you repentance unto life, Acts 11.18. and now being justified by his grace, you are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, Tit. 3.6* Now by grace you are acquitted from the guilt of sins, and have a clear title unto heaven: And friends, who knows whether the same mercy be not laid up in store for you? whether the same blessed change may not be wrought in you? whether the *same kindness a love of God our Saviour may not manifest itself to you?* Surely discourses of this nature (which you may enlarge upon occasion, according to the teachings of the good (pitie of God) may work in them a sense of danger and hope of delivery upon a saving account: Tis much that the Saints do for the profane world, much for their unregenerate neighbors; as is their duty commanded.

1. In communicating unto them in their outward wants, in drawing out their bowells towards distressed persons; they have a word of command, *Ecc. 11. 1. To cast their bread upon the waters, giving a portion to seven, and also to eight. So Heb. 13. 16. To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased, and Gal. 6. 10. to do good to all men, suppos'd in distress, as objects of mercy, though the ~~judges~~ the especially in the text directs them to a larger, and more liberal charity towards the household of faith; and I doubt not, much water runs out at these two spouts, of Mercy and Charity, that this testimony may be given of many of the Saints, 2 Cor. 8. 3. *That to their power, yea and beyond their power, they are willing to supply the wants of their fellow-Christians, yea fellow-creatures also*: and indeed it would be much their shame, and more their sin, if men of carnal principles and worldly expectancies, outstrip them in obedience to this great Gospel command, *Prov. 19. 17. He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again, Though God be much out of credit with the world, yet the Saints dare take his word, and do lend much unto the poor upon his single security.**

2. They have a great hand in procuring the blessing of God upon their carnal neighbors though God is good to all, making his *Sun to rise on the evil and sending rain on the unjust*, Mat. 5. 45. bearing witness to his goodness and God-head in all nations; by giving rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling the hearts of men with food and gladness, Act. 14. 17. yet even the mercies of the footstool, the neither springs run much for the sake of the godly, which are in the world, and are much as a return of their prayers; *Laban the Syrian* learned this by experience, that the Lord blessed him as to his outward estate, for *Jacobs* sake, *Gen. 30. 27.* *Potiphar* saw this also, chap. 39. 5. *It came to pass, from the time that Potiphar had made Joseph overseer in his house, that the Lord blessed the Egyptians house for Josephs sakes and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in*

in the house, and in the field; a plain text and that which teacheth great personages to commit their affairs, to the trust and care of *Josephs*, as Stewards and Bailiffs; it would go better with them then it does: But alas! *Josephs*, Religious men are not the only men in great families, more's the pity and more is there loss: the Lord help them to see and all men else, how much good the Lords *Josephs* are instrumental unto in the world, that they may be more prized by all, and masters may labor more to store their families with such servants: how desirous soever the profane world is to be rid of the Saints, sure I am, they would dearly miss them; *Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, yet he prayed in a great drought, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth fruit*, Jam. 4.17. make much then of *Jacobs, Josephs, and Elijahs*; O ye men of the world, you'll miss them in your barns and in your borders, I'll warrant you when they are gone.

3. They keep off many a blow from the places where they live, they either divert, or at least delay the execution of judgements: Ten righteous persons would have preserved four Cities from perishing *by fire from heaven*, Gen. 18.32. How did *David* and the Elders of Israel, by their prayer and humiliation, keep off the sad swoak of the pestilence from Jerusalem, when the Angel was now stretching forth his hand to destroy it, *1 Chron. 21.15, 16, 17*. And truly how should we admire the goodness of the Lord, that the plague hath rid circuit through most Nations in the world in late years, and that by a desolating mortality in some places, and yet hath not for this many years, broke forth in any raging manner, in this Nation of ours; ought not this distinguishing providence of God, since reformation first began, in the long Parliament, be much admired, and the Lord be thankfully adored for it? and may we not own a remnant in the Land, as a blessing from the Lord, who stood in the gap.

Nay farther, it is upon the account of the Saints, that the world continues, that the fire of God doth not kindle upon the whole Creation, which is combustible to melt the heavens and burn up the earth, with the works that are therein, the flood of waters was onely respired, until Noah, and his family were secured in the Ark, which being done, the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, Gen. 7. ver. 11. When Lot was entred into Zoar, then the Lord rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom, Gen. 19. ver. 23, 24. 2 Pet. 3. v. 9. The Lord is long-suffering, to us ward, not willing that any of his should perish; but when the whole election is brought in, then cometh the end; *when the sealing Angel Apoc. 7. ver. 1, 2, 3. had sealed the servants of God in their foreheads, then had the four Angels, that stood on the four corners of the earth, full communion to fall pel mel upon the earth*: It will be a dooms day with the world, *when the cloudes shall catch up the elect, to meet their Lord in the air, 1 Thess. 4. vers. 17.*

5. And Lastly, The Saints of God may mostly advance their carnal neighbours, in promoting their conversion, herein they would shew themselves friends indeed, if they would use all humble and earnest endeavours to bring them home to God. The Judicial Law commanded every Israelite to bring *a straying ox or ass home to his master*: How much more doth the Law of God and Christian love, oblige every true Israelite indeed, to bring a straggling *Prodigal home to his Fathers house*? All the Saints own it as their duty, to glorifie God in their generation; and wherein can they bring more glory to God, then in helping soules to heaven? and how can they find out a readier way to effect this great busines, then by telling, *Unless the Lord had been their help, their soules had well nigh dwelt in silence*? by making a faithfull narrative of their own conditions, by nature and by grace? when and how the goodness of the Lord was made known unto them upon a saving account? Some of the Saints, I may boldly affirm, have taken

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taken this course and prospered: Oh that this might be a word from the Lord, to awaken up all to this great duty! my soul even bleedeth within me, to observe the general neglect, and great averiness of most to this great business: some think their gifts too low, and their parts too inconsiderable to carry on a design of this importance; others have such honorable thoughts of a Gospel Ministry, rightly called and qualified, that they judge *the anointing of the Lord* to be upon them onely for that work, and therefore will not take their work out of their hand, least they should sin in such an attempt: Others cry out, let them do the work, who receive the wages, as though they worked onely for wages, which is a very unjust and uncharitable censure: Some there be that go higher yet, who bid the Ministers sit still, for they can do the work better then they, and load them with many foul aspersions, that they may the better get their work out of their hands, I mean, their people from under their Ministerial care, and oversight, indeed the distemper is very sad at this day in the Nation, and not a few fall under this last *class*, I think in no Nation more: the Lord rebuke that bold and blasphemous spirit, which is gone abroad, humble us for our sinnes, and shew us the pattern of his house, in all the in-goings, out-goings, and ordinances of it, that men of daring spirits may be bounded; I like not an invasion upon the Ministry, so as to destroy the office of it, nor yet an intrusion unto it, by men not duly called unto it; neither that any who are not in some measure of Gospel-fitness qualified for it, should be thrust, or thrust themselves upon a people, though called by man unto it; much less, that any should improve their gifts to set up themselves, and throw down the faithfull Ministry in the hearts and affections of people; least of all, that any should be suffered, much more encouraged, who corrupt the truths, and people of God, *who bring in damnable heresies, to draw away disciples after them, by reason of whom the way of truth is evil spoken of,* 2 Pet. 2. vers. 1, 2. formerly made good in those reproaches,

reproaches, which were cast upon Religion by the Pagans in the Primitive times, and are now cast upon it amongst us, by Papists, and carnal Professours, and both upon the account of Heresies; and therefore, as I owne the office of a Pastor, as distinct from the people, being the great bequestment of the Lord Jesus, to his Church, and for the spiritual edification of his Church, Eph. 4. ver. 8, 11, 12. Bless God for those able pens, who have with much learning, gravitie, weightinets of Arguments, and evidence of divine truth, propugned, and asserted it in these times of great opposition, and also thankfully acknowledges the integrity and faithfulness of the Civil and Supream power, which hath been as a covering Cherub to the godly Ministry, notwithstanding the many temptations which have been upon them to the contrary; so as a suitable return, both to God, and good men, I make it my humble proposal to my reverend brethren of the Ministry, that they would strengthen the hands of the Lords people, and by encouraging Arguments quicken them up to lay out themselves in their several capacities, and in a wise improvement in their several advantages, to win over sinners unto God: If *Eldad* and *Medad* prophesie in the camp, why should *Joshua* dislike it, *my Lord Moses forbid them*? If the Christians of our respective Congregations should keep up and in due order; or if sober and experienced Christians should minister words of advice, and exhortation, to their carnal neighbours, provided, they do it out of right principles, to right ends, and in a due manner: would it not hear ill, if we should cry to my Lord *Moses*, to forbid them? rather let us say, *Would God, that all the Lords people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them*, that they may receive abilities from God, to minister unto others, *That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. 4. ver. 12. O then, my dear Christian brethren, rise up in the name and might of our Lord Jesus Christ, seek the eternal welfare of your

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your carnall neighbours, I will not enlarge upon directions, for the right management of this great duty; only entreat you, that with modesty, and Christian sobriety; you would observe the boundaries that the Lord himself hath set betwixt a called Ministry, and a Christian Laity: that in your undertaking of this great charge, you would be much and earnest in your addresses unto God, and be faithfull in discoursing over experienced mercies from God: If you meet with sinners, that are hardened in their wayes, obstinate, wilfully, and sermon-proof; tell them, so it was with you, (I doubt not it hath been some of your cases) but when the Lord came in upon you by the thorow convictions of his Spirit, he awakened your consciences to such a sight of sin, and sence of wrath, filled your soules with such terrous from the Law, and softened your hearts with such a shower of Gospel grace, that you were immediately humbled, broken and brought in, you threw down your weapons, begg'd a parly, and submitted to the Lord Jesus: You found such a strange and secret work upon your hearts, that you cryed out with *Saul, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts 9. ver. 6. and Ephraim-like, *Though you had been as a young bullock, unaccustomed to the yoke, yet now the Lord hath turned you, and you are turned, Jer. 31. ver. 18.---* and tell them, thus it will be with them, if ever they have a conviction unto Conversion; God will break their stomachs, soften their iron sinews, subdue their Gospel-enmity, and give them a spirit of holy compliance with his blessed wayes and will; and that God can bring forth this work in their hearts, though obstinate, and obdurate, as well as he hath brought it forth upon yours; and then they will be of another mind, however at present they stand it out with that boldness and daringness of spirit against Law and Gospel: If you meet with sinners, *whom the arrows of the Lord have wounded*, his Spirit hath thoroughly awakened, and his Word hath filled with such sad apprehensions of sin, and wrath, that they cry out with them, *Acts 2. vers. 37. Men*

*Men and brethren, what shall we do ? or with the Jaylour, Acts 16. v.30. Sirs, what must I do, to be saved ? tell them, this was your case ; tell what methods of mercy the Lord used, to the healing up of your wounds, and to the quieting of your consciences, that so, they may be encouraged to the use of Gospel-means, and to an hope of the same grace and goodness of the Lord, towards them : If you meet with, (as you will with many) proud, presumptuous Formalists ; that fill their sails with vain hopes of Salvation, without any saving change wrought upon them, without any inward principles of life & light planted in them, or without any lively Acts of Faith, Repentance, Self-denial, Mortification, &c. put forth by them ; tell them, this was your case, you had the same persuasions, you were such foolish Virgins, and that then, you thought your penny as good silver for heaven, as the best, deriding the precise Puritan, and scoffing at the power of Godliness ; but when the Lord opened your eyes, and shined into your souls with a beam of saving light, you soon discovered your Errour, how you had *built upon the sand*, that your Infatuation was but sand, your outward Priviledges were but sand, your Formal Profession was but sand ; yea, all you built upon was but sand ; so that, had death and Judgment like windes and waves forcibly beat upon your house, it would certainly have fallen, and you had been ruined to all eternity ; but now you have digged deep, and laid your *foundation sure upon a rock* ; you have built upon a new foundation for heaven, now you finde a new creation wrought in you ; now you mourn over those sins, which formerly you made your selves merry with ; now you contest against those lusts which formerly you cherished, now you are broken off from those lewd Companions, with whom you were formerly bound up in wayes of sin ; now you asse faith upon Jesus Christ for the pardon of sins, rejoyce in him, and have *no confidence in the flesh*, Phil. 3. ver. 3. Now you are convinced, that grace is the onely way to glory, and, that *without belines no man shall see God*, Heb. 12. ver. 14. you now owne Religion in all*

all the duties of it ; love the Ordinances which formerly you loathed, delight in the society of the Saints, which formerly you derided ; maintain communion with God, in the Spirit, which formerly you mocked at ; and that now, *The God of hope hath filled you with peace and joy through believing, Rom. 15. ver. 13. and you find Christ in you, the hope of glory, Col. 1. ver. 27.* Pursue this method, as the Lord puts opportunities into your hands, and as you meet with new cases, suit your experiences according to what you have been, and now are ; and I doubt not, you will finde encouraging success ; for though I honour the word, (I hope, as much as any,) as having the greatest authority upon the consciences of men, and as being the great instrument of new birth, especially when it is faithfully dispensed by faithfull messengers, (Jesus Christ giving a clear proof of his speaking in them, 2 Cor. 13. ver. 3.) yet certainly, Christians as such, (though they do not invade the ministerial Office, nor looten one stone in that partition wall, which Christ hath raised up with his own hands, betwixt a called Ministry and converted Layty) may be instrumental to much spiritual good among their carnal relations : It was much that the Church did towards the gaining over the daughters of *Jerusalem*, by her commendatory oration of Jesus Christ, *Cant. Chap. 5.* For *Chap. 6.* they put the question, *Whether is thy beloved gone ? Oh thou, fairest among women, whether is thy beloved turned ? that we may seek him with thee : The woman of Samarieh* did much in ripening those fields, which began to be white unto the harvest, *John 4. ver. 28, 29.* compared with *ver. 39.* Surely when the experiences of believers, do run in a parallel line with the words, and as counterpains do bear a full testimony to the truth of it, men give a more willing entertainment unto it, when they hear Christians affirm, what Ministers assert, men listen more after it : Oh then break your pitchers, that your candles may shine, and give lights to the world, *holding forth the word of eternal life* unto others, in your several standings and capacities, relative

relative and religious : And give me leave to lay down these considerations, by way of inducement unto you. Consider.

Con. 1. That the conversion of a sinner is a matter of great well-pleasingness unto God ; *Isa. 53. ver. 10.* it is termed *the pleasure of the Lord, ve-captess, the will of the Leighb Crit. Lord*, that which he wills with greatest pleasure and de-Sacr. light ; it notes *the highest content that may be, to wit, delight which is the intention, and strength of affection* : hence *Isa. 62. ver. 4.* the Church is called *Hephzibah*, that is, *my pleasure in her* ; the parables of the *lost sheep* and *lost son*, do fully evidence this, *Luke 15.* you cannot do a work, that will find greater acceptance with God, then acts of mercy, *Hof. 6. ver. 6.* *I desired mercy and not sacrifice* : the word in the Original is the same with that in *Isaiah* forementioned, implying to will and desire a thing with a great delight and complacency ; so that a reverend Expolitour upon the *M^t, Tur-sing to me, that I desire it at my heart, nothing in the world is so* *Hof. ver 6. pleasing to me as mercy, & shews that God had rather have pag. 599. it, then all insinuated ordinances and worships, which by sacrifice are synecdochically meant, and then insinuating in cases of mercy.* His fourth case is the case of souls ; and that is in Christs case, *Mat. 9. 13.* *Go and learn what that mean-* *Page. 605. eth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance* : we are ready to think, that all things must give way to insinuated worship : but certainly, immortall souls, are of more worth then ordinances ; O surely the greatest act of mercy which we receive from God, is our reconciliation to him, whereby we are translated from darkness, into the kingdom of his dear son, that being justified by his grace, we may be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, *Tit. 3. ver. 7.* and so, the highest piece of mercy, which we can shew to sinners for God, is to be instrumentall in the saving of them : bowels of mercy in us evidence Gods electing grace unto us, *Col. 3. ver. 12.* *Put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy* ; and sure we cannot shew more bowells, in any act

act of mercy to man, then in endeavouring his salvation. Consider,

Consid. 2. There is a great honour to the Lord Jesus Christ, when sinners are savingly brought in unto him: it is a jewel added to the glorious diadem of King Jesus, *Psal.* 45. 3. *David* speaking in the spirit unto King Jesus, bids him gird his sword upon his thigh, which was the Ensign of his prowess and regal power, and adds with thy glory and thy Majesty, implying, that when people fall under him, *i. e.* are converted and submit unto him, it tends to advance his glorious Majesty, *Prov.* 14. ver. 28. *In the multitude of people is the Kings honour*: *Zion* and *Babylon* are the two great Empires of the world, that under Christ, this under Belial: now one great part of Christs honour, as he is King of *Zion*, consists in the multitude of converts, who being brought over from the devils quarters, become his subjects; it is said, *1 Sam.* 31. ver. 12. *That all the valiant men of Jabesh-Gilead, went all night and took the bones of Saul, and the bones of his sons, from the walls of Bethshan, and came and brought them to Jabesh*: let me allude this; how is the glory of Christ advanced, when all the valiant men, Ministers, and Christians, go forth in the strength of the spirit of Christ, to fetch off not the bodies onely, but the souls also of men and women from *Bethshan*, and bring them to *Jabesh*; from sin to sanctity? from *Beth-aven* to *Bethel*? Converted ones are as *Troopies* after victory, living monuments of honour to a conquering Christ, in the places where they live: how then should the fence of that honour, which is gained for Christ, in gaining sinners from *Sathan* unto Christ, act and spirit the Saints in this great undertaking.

Consid. 3. Consider, that the providences of God, which have gone over and through these Nations, in the years last past, do speak the Saints duty, and their hope of successe in what is now proposed: how many storms of warre have been upon the land? how fierce and full of rage hath the enemy been? how many plots and en-
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Phil. 1. 12.

² *Thel.* 1. 11.
12.

gines of policy have been contrived ? how have men of popish and prophane principles and spirits, struck at the very root of profession ? how have they designed the extirpation of the godly ? *They that hate thee have lifted up their heads.* I do not say nor think, that all they which lifted up their heads in the late waies under the royall banner, were haters of God nor of his people, as such ; though they were lifted up very high in their mistaken zeal, for Kingly interest, and in conscience of the oath of God (which they judged) lay'd such obligations upon them ; yet certainly, without any breach of charity, lofty language may boldly affirm, that there were a company of men not inconsiderable for number) who took crafty counsel against the Lord's people, and consulted against his hidden ones, *ver. 3.* and spake out (doublelesse their very hearts and desires) *come let us cut them off from being a nation* (or from having any place of residency in the nation) that the *name of Israel may be no more in remembrance* : was not this attempted, at least against the godly party, as Schismatics and rebels, so I limit their attempt ; for we had many pitifull Parliamentarians, who might have gone in the throng of the most ungodly Cavaliers, and in likelihood, would have found favour both for life and estate, if the issue of the warre had gone for the King : and hath not the Lord broken them and their plots in pieces ? hath he not fastened his people as a nail in a sure place ? *Isa. 22. ver. 23.* what think you then ? are not these mercies obligations upon you from the Lord to pursue his honour ? are they not opportunities put into your hands, to advise, exhort, and perswade your families, friends, and neighbours, and help them to heaven ? O what a pattern of Gospel-charity is good *Corneilius* ! *Act. 10. ver. 24.* *He had called together his kinsfolks and near friends* to partake with him in that word of salvation, which *Peter* from the Lord, was to bring unto him : how desirous was he to take them all into the Gospel-wherry, that they might all be wafted over to the Lord Jesus ! therefore, *ver. 33.* he tell's *Peter, We are all here*

here present before the Lord, to bear all things that are commanded thee of God: O that such a gaining spirit, such a winning carriage was in all the Saints! Indeed, when Religion was under the hatches in the nation, and the old Puritans were underlins in every town, they might have feared Lot's return from the wicked Sodomites, and that dogs would have snarled at them, *if they had given holy things unto them*; but now that godliness is advanced to the throne, that the people of the *God of Abraham*, are as *Princes among the people*, Psal. 47. ver. 9. and that the Kingdome and the Dominion, (in a considerable measure) is given to the people of the *Saints of the most high*, Dan. 7. ver. 27. they have an easier access to their prophane neighbours, and more hope of fattening good upon their spirits: would God you would every where take up this practice, that you would make this, as one of your returns to a good God! not to *proselyte* others to your particular opinions and persuasions (if in any thing you be Heterodox) but to win them over to the power of godliness, and to embrace that Jesus Christ, who is so fully and clearly offered in the Gospel; O think you hear the Lord speaking singly to you, by way of encouragement in this work, and in reference to your respective towns, as he did to *Paul*, Act. 18. ver. 9, 10. *Speak and hold not thy peace, for I have much people in this city*: Let's not limit the election of grace to the called ones, but hopefully believe, that the names of many are in the *Lamb's book of life*, whose natures are yet unrenewed, and who walks not after the Lambe in Gospel-paths; and let us improve, yea own our naturall preservations, as a fruit of Gods-longsuffering, that all his elect ones in the Nation, might be brought off from a perishing estate, and might all come to repentance, 2. *Pet.* 3. 9.

Con. 4. Consider, that it is a maxime both in grace and nature, that we must do unto others, what we would have others do unto us; we must make other mens cases our own; this our Saviour lay's down, *Matth.* 7. ver. 12. *All things whatsoever ye would have men do unto you, do ye even*

ven the same unto them, for this is the law and the Prophets; this is the Royall law; the standard of equity in this kind, a sealed weight and rule according to which we must converse with all men as one faith; Charity (via true) begins at home in regard of order, but not of time; for so soon as you begin to love your selves, in the best sense, you must then love your neighbours as your selves; now then put the case by way of supposition; suppose you were ignorant, carnal, and unbelieving, and had a sence of that misery you were hastening unto, that you saw your selves upon the brink of the grave and borders of hell; would you not thank that Christian that would reprove you in love, advise you in love, instruct you in love, and that would pull you out of the fire, though he saved you with fear, Jud. ver. 23. would you not own it as a piece of highest love, and good will in any, that would endeavour your everlasting welfare? why then, what you would others should do unto you, do you the same unto them; if you should casually slip into the river, and be near unto drowning, would you not have your neighbour lend his hand to help you out? if a neighbour should see a fire kindled upon any of your houses, when you and your whole family were fast asleep, and should suddenly awaken you, by crying fire, fire, by which means you and yours are preserved from the flames, would you quarrel with him for breaking your sleep, or coming upon your ground? I trow you would not; but rather own it as an act of singular love; why, go you and do likewise, to your sinking and sleeping neighbours; hand them out of the depths of sin, and awaken them, that everlasting flames may not catch hold upon them: The law of love will never rightly be fulfilled, until Christians are acted by a principle of fellow-feelingness; he that considers himself, lest he be tempted, will restore a brother that is overtaken in a fault, with a spirit of meekness, Gal. 6. ver. 1. He will remember those that are in bonds, who by a sympathizing spirit is bowed with them; and will consider them which suffer adversity, who himself is also in the body, and as a fellow-member feels the

smart of their misery, *Heb. 13. ver. 3.* O this is the way to continue brotherly love and advance it, when your endeavours are serious to save souls from hell, and when you wish your neighbours well as to their everlasting estate, when with *Paul* your hearts desire and prayer to God is, *that they may be saved, Rom. 10. ver. 1.*

Consid. 5. Consider, that what your carnall neighbours are, you were; and some of you have been as vile as any, and yet you have now obtained mercy; the spirit and grace of God have put you into a hopefull way for heaven; and why may it not be so with them? are some of your neighbours fornicatours and adulterers? why, so were some of you: are some of them idolatours? why, so were some of you: are some of them thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners? *Why, so were some of you, 1 Cor. 6. ver. 9, 10.* I speak not this to shame any servant of the Lord; nor do I cast his former sins into his teeth to reproach him, (there are enough will do that)

but to enmind him of the endeavour of good to them, who at present are what he once was----*but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, ver. 11.* and why may not they be so? can you give any other reason but free-grace, and the meer *word*, *the good pleasure of God,* that you are washed, whilest they continue filthy; that you are sanctified, whenas they are all over polluted; or that you are justified, whereas the guilt of sin lies upon them still? and cannot the name of Christ and Spirit of God, do all that in them and for them, which is done in and for you? *Titus 3. ver. 3.* the Apostle gives this in charge unto *Titus*, that he should enmind the Brethren of this as their duty, *to shew all meeknesse unto all men,* in their dealing with them, under an hopefull expectation, that a gracious change may be wrought in them, though little of God appears at present in them, and this he inforceth by leading them back, to consider what themselves once were, *for we our selves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceiving, serving divers lusts and pleasures,*

ures, living in malice, and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

Con. 6. Consider, that it is a piece of good friendship to your selves, to endeavour the spirituall good of others; you do very much consult your own advantage by it, and this I shall offer in some particulars.

It is an high point of spirituall good husbandry, an excellent way to encrease your own stock; a good Minister cannot preach a good Sermon, nor a sober Christian manage a spirituall discourse, but they do or may receive good to themselves, Prov. 11. ver. 25. *The liberall soul* ^{Nephefs Brother} *shall also be watered,* ^{riches,} *the* ^{soul of blis-} *himself;* ^{sing.} it is not the liberall hand, though it be true as to acts of common bounty, if rightly ordered; but the liberall soul, answering to that, Prov. 10. ver. 11. *The lips of the righteous feed many,* by wholesome counsell, seasonable exhortations, and spirituall instructions; now this is a fatning discourse, the soul thrives bravely that observes this method; your own graces will be more exercised; your own consciences will be awakened, your own knowledge will be more enlarged, and your own spirits will be more quickened unto, and established in the good wayes and truths of God; you cannot be serious in reproving others, but it will give corruption a wound in your own hearts; you cannot perswade others to repent of their sins, but it will stirre you up to renew repentance for your own sins; you cannot exhort others to duty, but you will be admonisht of your own; and you cannot deal seriously with others about salvation, but it will quicken up an holy diligence in you to mind your own salvation. Surely these improvements are well worth your labour.

2. It makes much for your personall safety; the more there be to stand in the gap, the better the breach will be made up; ten would have preserved Sodom, when as nine could not do it: the Saints do much with God when numerous and unanimous: when the whole Church prays for Peter, an Angel procures his Goal-delivery: *you helping*

ing together with your prayers, is Paul's expression, owning the joint addresses of the *Corinthians*, 2 *Cor.* 1. ver. 11. *striving together for the faith of the Gospel*, Phil. 1. ver. 27. Paul lays much stress upon number and unity, when many strive, and strive together like valiant Champions, and a well ordered army; it is like to go well with the Gospel in the Doctrines and liberty of it: *Therefore call your bread upon the waters, for ye know not what evil shall be upon the earth*, Eccl. 11. ver. 1. 2. Take this in a spiritual sense, and you will find an enforcement in it to the duty proposed; for in a time of straight, *Zech.* 12. ver. 5. *The Governors of Judah shall say in their heart, even from the heart acknowledge it, the Inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the Lord their God*: By virtue of their Interest in the Lord their God, evils have been diverted, Judgments have been removed, and blessings in their right seasons have been procured.

*Legio ful-
minata.*

3. It makes much for your spiritual comfort, *The soul of righteous Lot was vexed, from day to day, with the unlawful deeds of the Sodomites*, 2 *Pet.* 2. ver. 8. Is not this your case? *Do not your eyes run down with tears, because men keep not Gods Law? yea, in that abundance, that they swell into rivers? Holy David's did*, *Psal.* 119. 136. Is not every profane wretch an *Hazael* to your eyes, and a *Hadadrimmon* to your hearts: and can you step out of your door, (in many places it is so) and not see some piece of wickedness, which cuts you to the heart? or hear every man speak vanity to his neighbour, *Psal.* 12. ver. 2. now how would it revive your spirits, how would it rejoyce and comfort your hearts, if you could see the face of things changed amongst you? that you might go to this neighbours house, and finde them praying, to another, and find them praising God; to a third, and find them reading and discoursing of the word, and things of God; nay, that you could not walk in the streets, but you should hear the Inhabitants of one city saying unto another, let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts, *Zech.* 8. ver. 21.

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This sets forth the zeal and charity of those converts, who would not come alone, but draw others along in company with them to the worship of God, which is lively expressed in a *Mimesis*, or imitation of the en-Mr. *Preamble*, encouragements and invitations they should use one to another : --- *I will go also* ; every one was as forward for himself, as zealous for another, as a learned Expofitor hath it : *O blessed frame of spirit, O religion would then flourish indeed, when Ministers have their comes and calls, each to other, to the service of God* : nay, that such an awakening should be upon your neighbours, that here one should take hold of the skirts of your garments ; and here another, (as children catch hold on their Mothers gowns, hang upon them, and run after them,) saying, we will go with you, to such an Ordinance, to such a Christian meeting, for we have heard that God is with you ; we heard it formerly, but believed it not, yea, denied it, but now we have heard from the secret teachings of the Spirit of God within us, and are convinced of it, that God is with you ; with you in prayer, with you in the word preached ; with you in all the duties of Religion, with you in your private waitings upon him, with you in the way of holiness ; *Of a truth God is in you*, 1 Cor. 14. ver. 25. and therefore we will go with you : your God shall be our God, your wayes shall be our wayes, and your company shall be our company : what a rejoicing of heart would this be to the truly godly ! and if the Lord give his blessing to the painfull endeavours of his faithfull Ministry, and if you that are Christians act up with zeal to the course propounded, how might the communion of Saints be maintained, the Commonwealth of believers be enlarged, and the places of our habitations be as the suburbs of heaven !

It layes a good foundation for posterity, you are now sowing that seed, the harvest whereof may be reaped by your children ; you are digging that well, of which your Infants may fill their buckets : Personall piety is profitable to posterity, 2 Kings 10. ver. 30. It was very much

much that was promised to *Jehu*, for cutting off *Abab's* wicked Family, and destroying the temple and worshippers of *Baal*: And the Lord said unto *Jehu*, because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of *Abab* according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel: And what a blessing doth the Lord entail upon the seed of the righteous, Psal. 112. ver. 1, 2. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: that delighteth greatly in his Commandments: his seed shall be mighty upon the earth, the generation of the upright shall be blessed: But that Religion which you now advance, may be of spiritual advantage to them, when you are dead, Psal. 102. ver. 18. This shall be written for the generation to come, and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord, even for your faithful endeavours in raising Zion out of her dust, and Religion out of the rubbish, in the places where you live: How would you have blessed God, if you had found Religion in such a posture! how would you have honoured the memory of your Predecessors, if they had travailed to have brought that to pass, which you are now encouraged unto! nay more, you may lend that word of saving advice to a carnal neighbour, which may be paid you in again, by the bringing home of a *Prodigal child*. Your covenants for money run to you and to your heirs, the Debt is not lost, if your heirs receive it; so your heirs may receive (in a spiritual sense) the Principal with the loan, when you are dead: happy is he who makes such provision for his children: one, whom you have in the way proposed, brought off from vile and vicious courses, may see a childe of yours, when you are at rest, running in the same wayes, and tell him, ah friend, just thus it was with me, I was running headlong upon mine own destruction, and your Father pitied me, reproved, instructed, advised me, brought me off from my desperate wayes, and put me into a good way for heaven: And now I desire to shew the kindness of the Lord to you, by dealing as plainly and faithfully with

with you, as I was dealt with by your father, and who knows, but the same course, may through grace, produce the same good effects : If *David* remembered and requited the kindness of *Jonathan*, in shewing love to his lame *Mephibosheth*, after *Jonathan's* death ; why not the spirit of *David* stirre up bowels in those, whom you have helped heaven-ward, to requite that kindness in your lame *Mephibosheth* ? there is ground of hope.

5. It hath a tendency towards your everlasting comfort ; it beareth fruit unto eternity ; the favour of this ointment doth not spend it self in this life, *Apoc. 14. ver. 13. Blessed are the dead, that dy in the Lord, their works follow them* : This work of mercy which you shew in converting a sinner from the error of his way, and saving a soul from death, *Jam. 5. ver. 20. shall follow you to eternity* ; it shall be had in everlasting remembrances ; it shall be registred in that book of Records, which was writ before the Lord, for those that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name, *Mal. 3. ver. 16. They shall be mine, in the day that I make up my jewels* : The Prophet *Daniel* speaks fully to the Saints after recompence upon this account, *Dan. 12. ver. 3. They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament* ; they that be teachingly wife, of *Mascul, that do prudently instruct* ; so it properly refers to the teaching Ministry, but may not unfitly be referred unto instructing Christians, and I hope, without any force to the Word, or any violence offered to a called Ministry : Now, wherein doth the wisdom of the wife shew it self, so as to enucle them to this firmamentall brightness ? why, the onely wife among the Sonnes of men doth determine it, *Prov. 11. ver. 30. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, the genuine fruit of the righteous is to bring forth life in those he converseth with* ; Salvation wisdom is the highest wisdom, and he that winneth soules is by the Holy Ghost stiled, *the wise Chanceman* ; and indeed *Daniel* himself expoundeth it to the same sence, and they that turn many unto righteousness, as the starres for ever : Though there be some difficulty in this

this Text, and some difference among expofitours, about the fense of it, yet fure, I may with much fafety, offer thefe pofitions from it,

1. That man by nature runs off from his primitive and created righteoufnefs, unto by-paths of fin and unrighteoufnefs, --- This is clearly fupposed.

2. That Converfion mainly confifteth in our turning from fin unto righteoufnefs, *from the power of Satan unto God.*

3. That men are inftrumental in the converfion of men, to wit, in turning them from fin to righteoufnefs.

4. That this turning of men from fin to righteoufnefs, hath a fure promife of future honour.

5. That the work of Converfion is not onely limited to a teaching Miniftery; it is not fo proper to them, as that it is exclusive to all others, to have any hand or inftrumentality in it: It was much, that *the woman of Samaria* did towards the gathering of thofe fields which our Saviour faw beginning to be white, as they that read, *John* 4. may obferve: an unlikely means to effect fo great a matter; but whats that to the Almighty? as *Mr. Trap* fpeaks; *and brings in Junius* *profefling that the firft thing that turned him from Atheifme, was conference with a country-man of his not farre from Florence, --- enquire into Aūs and Morum.* Fol. 767. Experience doth very much confirme this, many fervants may blefs God, who brought them under godly acquaintance: I hope none will think that by this, I derogate ought from the office of a called Miniftery; if the feed be fown by others, it is ripened by them; If the firft courfe of ftones be laid by others, the building is finifhed by them: *Eph.* 4. v. 12. a called Miniftery doth *perfekt the Saints, and edifie, or build up the body of Chrift*; If others are inftrumental to their fpiritual birth, yet the Miniftery goes forth in *the fpirit and power of Elias, to make them ready, as a people prepared for the Lord, Luke* 1. ver. 17. and that, though men have ten thoufand Infructours, yet a Godly Miniftery,

Read

Mr. Baxter, in his *Gild. falv.* Page 469, 470, 471.

tery, doth in Christ Jesus beget them through the Gospel, that is, perfect the birth, 1 Cor. 4. ver. 15. the Spirit makes the seed of the Word by them prolifical, and generative.

6. That the honour of converting sinners unto God shall be an everlasting honour, 1 Pet. 5. ver. 4. *ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away*: But I desire the Reader not to mistake me herein, as though,

1. I did positively assert, that none can subserve to the conversion of others, who are unconverted themselves; though some think, and I among the rest also, *Aliorum salutem scilicet* that God will not honour, at least, very rarely doth, the Ministry of an unregenerate person, with the Conversion of others; though the called ones may be comforted, and farther built up by gifted Ministers, yet I think Instances be but rare of second-birth-Christians, *Calvin. in* who call them Fathers: *Act. 20.*

2. Neither do I affirm, that to be instrumental in the saving of others, hath any thing of merit in it, toward the saving of a mans self:

3. Nor, that it is evidence enough in it self for heaven; so that, he who hath the seal of his Ministry, may without farther enquiry into his own estate, conclude, he hath the seal of the living God in his forehead, and is upon that single account, sure of heaven:

4. Nor, that we should be so wholly taken up with the saving of others, as to neglect our own salvation:

5. Nor, that the glory of them, who are subservient, through grace to the conversion of sinners, shall exceed the glory of all other Saints, for though different degrees of glory be clear, 1 Cor. 15. ver. 41. yet to lay the ground of that difference, only in the point mistit upon, I do not, I dare not: But tis probable this Text of *Daniel* refers to some after privilege, or different estate of honour in heaven, which they that turn many unto righteousness, shall receive from the Lord, from what, they that are turned unto righteousness shall have; for though every vessel shall be filled, yet these may be more capacious

capacious than others; unless we fit down with what sense is put upon it by a late godly Divine, as to the first Resurrection, and that in order to the *personal reign* of Christ upon earth: But suppose, that Text should not speak fully to the assertion; yet certainly, to have a mediate hand in saving an immortal soul is a noble work, and shall be honoured by the Lord with highest acceptance, as that which brings the creature into some degree of conformity to the Lord Jesus, *who is exalted to be a Prince, and a Saviour*, Acts 5. vers. 21. Besides, there is much in that of our Saviour, *John 4. vers. 36. And he that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life, that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together*, he quickens up his Disciples to diligence in Gospel work;

First, By propounding wages for their work; though not by way of merit, yet of grace:

Secondly, By that common joy, which Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, and all the Lords servants, who are instrumental in the conversion of sinners, shall have in heaven.

Consider, That bad men are very active, and industrious to gain over others, to their bad principles, and worse practices: The spirit of the world is a gaining spirit: Wicked men are true to their own Interest, and serviceable to their own Master: Wicked men are the Devils setters, or like that little beast which hunts the prey for the old lyon: Many persons of hopeful ingenuity and carriage are decoy'd by the sleights and subtilties of some old sinners: See how the wife man sets them forth to the life, *Prov. 1. ver. 10, 11. 1.* By their manner of deceiving, expressed, in their fair and flattering words, they entice, *blanditis & phaleratis verbis decipiunt, they deceive with their smooth tongue, and fair speeches*, so the force of the word, in the Hebrew implies; hence it is rendered, *sic pellexerint*, referring to the fawning carriage and flatteries of an Harlot, fully held forth *Chap. 7. vers. 14. Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away*

away of his own lusts, and is inticed, as the silly fish is by the bait upon the hook: Thus do wicked men like fishers and fowlers cunningly deceive the simple.

2. Their manner of deceiving is expressed, by their call unto sin, *come with us*, they call the tradesman out of his shop, and the ploughman out of the field to quarry and mate with them in their sinful practices: much of this language may be heard abroad in the world, and some is upon record in the word, as that *ale-bench call*, Isa. 56. ver. 12. *Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill our selves with strong drink, and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant*! This is the drunkards oratory and promise, to toll in and enter their young quaffers with.

3. They are set forth by their methods of deceiving, by the artifices they use:

First, they perfwade those that they draw in, that they will drive on such close designs, carry things with such privacy, that the guilt of blood shall never be charged upon their score; implied in these phrases, *let us lurk privily--let us swallow them alive as the grave*, &c. as if they had said, we will manage our affairs with that secrecy, that strangers may as easily know the dead by their faces, and what deaths they died of whom the grave hath swallowed up, and the pit hath covered, as men shall know, who did this murther, and how it was done: doubtlesse this hope of secrecy hath undone many.

Secondly, they give great assurances of much gain and advantage? *we shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil*; Alas! thou art a poor fellow, hast not a penny scarce to help thy self withall, but come, come with us, we'll help thee to money enough, thou shalt be a rich man pretently; yonder is a booty will make us all men.

Thirdly, they promise to be very honest, to give him his full share, *cast in thy lot among us*; *we will all have one purse*: Wee'll divide the spoil, thou shalt have thy lot: nay more, thou shalt never want while we have it, we'll have

have a community of goods, a common stock; these are winning ways, prevailing arguments, gilded pills and tempting poisons, where the heart is not in some measure antidoted by grace against them, and doubtlesse the devil gains much ground in the world by such artifices, catcheth many a fowl in his nets, by means of these decoys: his servants are true to his interest, they spare neither pains nor purses to advance it; nor are his head-servants, I mean, Hereticks and Impostours (those that are the chief factours and head men among their brethren) lesse industrious: into how many shapes, *Proterus* like, will the Jesuite cast himself? how many hazzards of his neck will he run? and how many hard journeyes will he take to reconcile a poor Protestant to the Church of Rome? neither do some others fall short of the Jesuites, either pains or zeal, to profelyte men to their opinions; we have seen that made good in our dayes, which our Saviour spake of the *Scribes and Pharisees*, Matth. 23. ver. 15. *Ye compass sea and land to make one profelyte*: What wanderers among the Nations have some of our Sect-Masters been? what labours and hardships have some undergone? what journeyes, tedious, and dangerous, by land and sea, have some undertook? what errand have they gone on? what merchandizes have they exported, but some old drugs and antiquated errors, which the Saints in former ages and forreign parts have exploded, but now being in-land commodities, of the growth of our own Nation, and being now put into a new dresse by men of English birth, pretending hatred to the Romish Hierarchy, are become vendible in most parts? O what marts and markets have been kept by them, in many of our towns, to put off their stale and stollen wares! and what sale have they had in some places! whole towns almost in some places have come in to truck and barter with them: the more is the pety that the spirit of delusion should gain so farre upon English ground? O how should this provoke all that fear the Lord in truth to pursue salvation-work with utmost diligence! to endeavour

your

your with much seriousness of spirit, the winning over souls to God! How shall we answer the charge of our own consciences at a dying hour? how shall we look our dear Redeemer in the face at the last day? nay how shall we stand against the great accuser before the great *tribunal*, when he shall charge this spirituall sloth and negligence upon us? when he shall speak to the Judge of all the world, and cry for justice against us, urging that his servants have been more faithfull and serviceable to him, then we have been to the Lord Jesus, though henever bled to redeem them, never underwent the wrath of a sin-revenging God for them, never laid down his life to save them out of hell, never gave them inward and heart consolations here, neither prepared for, nor ever promised unto them, a *state of everlasting blessednesse, and fulnesse of joy in his presence forevermore* hereafter: and therefore shall call for sentence to be given out against us, as being unworthy of that *crown of glory*: O this is a consideration of great weight, the Lord help us to take the right poise of it; let us take shame unto our selves for our former negligence, and be quickened up to more industriousnesse for the future! Let not any of the devils drudges out-work us, nor any of his merchants out-bid us, much lesse any of his pedlers our-sell us for the time to come; let not others do more to undo, then we to save souls, nor be more unwearied in their labours and travells to pervert, then we are to convert men; if there be a person that deserves, as a badge of honour, the name of that old Disciple, trudge o're the world, let not Jesuite and Heretick get it from us.

To shut up this, I beseech you dear Christians, into whose hands providence shall cast this treatise, weigh these considerations laid down; and let them with what others the spirit of the Lord shall suggest unto you, or any of my learned brethren shall offer, have an holy force upon your spirits, to put you upon serious endeavours of doing good to your carnall neighbours, *if per-
adventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledg-
ing*

ing of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snares of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will, 2 Tim. 2. ver. 25, 26. and that you may be eased by the Lord as instruments of their salvation: listen not to flesh and blood, which will be tampering with you to disswade you from it, and will throw in an hundred objections, and carnall cavils against it; onely observe your stations, invade not the ministry, nor despise it; be humble in all your applications to your ignorant neighbours, and under any successe which the Lord shall answer your endeavours with, and under all discouragements and deadnesse of heart to this duty, improve grace received and temporall preferuations, as arguments to quicken you up to this duty, and to other duties which are mentioned in this treatise, that you may live best to God, best to your selves, and best to all others; and alwayes wear this text, as a sign upon your hands; and as frontlets between your eyes to enmind you of the Lord's mercies; unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence.

Use 4. Are the appearances of God eminent an immediate to the help of his people in the day of their distress? have you experienced this truth? have you seen the outgoings of the Lord in your personall safety and preferuations? why then fetch comfort and encouragement from hence, and lift up your hearts and hands unto God in expectancy of help and succour, in these following cases.

1. When Church affairs do meet with dark and gloomy day: when the Gospel is under some restraint as to liberty, or under some corruption as to purity in word and worships; reflect upon the outgoings of God unto you, and consider that mercy, that goodness, that wisdom, that power, &c. which were engaged for your rescue in an evil day; then play the good Logicians, and in a way of divine induction argue *à minore ad majus*, from the lesse to the greater; if the Lord extended help to me in such an eminent manner, how much more shall

the arm of the Lord be made bare, in the rescue of many Saints? if a single believer found the Lord so present in a day of trouble, how shall a society of believers find him in such a day? if a little sculler was brought safe to shore from off a stormy sea, how will the Lord calm *the raging waves*, when the ship of his Church is tempest-tost? if his care was so great over one member, sure the whole family shall not be neglected by him: O there's much sweetness and much truth in this way of arguing. Thus did David, Psal. 30, ver. 1, 2. *O Lord my God, I cried unto thee and thou hast healed me; O Lord thou hast brought up my life from the grave, thou hast kept me alive that I should not go down into the pit; here was a personal deliverance, and what doth he inferre from hence? namely, that the Church and people of God shall receive the same measure of mercy from him in the day of their distresse; therefore he saith, ver. 4. Sing unto the Lord O ye Saints of his; I, but may the Saints say, we have little cause of mirth, we may now hang our harps upon the willows; the waters of Babylon by which we are set down, do call for weeping rather then rejoicing; no, sayes he, I read your safety in mine own; for ver. 5. His anger endure b but for a moment; *is a nubecula cito evanescat*, as he said of Julian's persecution, *weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*: the Churches afflictions though they be sharp, yet they shall be but short, though they be violent, they shall be transient; this I asser, sayes he, as having been mine own case, I have had many clear mornings after cloudy nights; for the Lord hath brought my life from the grave, he hath kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. Again, Psal. 31, ver. 22. I said in mine baw, so great were my fears and so small was my faith, I am cut off from before thine eyes; I am a lost, a dead, an undone man, nevertheless thou hearest the voice of my supplications when I cryed unto thee, what doth he conclude from hence? why, ver. 23, 24. O love the Lord all ye his Saints, for the Lord preserveth the faithfull and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer, repayeth abundantly, or with surplusage,*

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sage; in seipso aut semine suo, either in himself or in his posterity; God will be sure to be meet with him, and therefore he bids them be of good courage, bear up bravely, be stout and stedfast in the faith under trials; did the Lord hear my prayers, and will he not hear his praying Church? did he appear to my help, and will he refuse help to his beloved spouse? was my trouble but as a rack- ing cloud, soon blown over by the wind of Gods favour, and shall the Churches calamity be as a dark heaven set round with raine? surely no; *though the nations do rust like the rushings of many waters, yet God shall rebuke them*: the word signifies, shall sharply and severely chide them, or destroy them, which implied in the following words, *and they shall flee farre off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a thing routing before the whirlwind: and behold at even tide trouble, and before the morning he is not: this is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us*, Isa. 17. ver. 13, 14. O then be encouraged to hope and pray, and pray in hope, when the Church is brought into greatest straits, when the Armies of Gog and Magog do go up on the breadth of the earth, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea, and compass the camp of the Saints about and the beloved city; *that fire shall come down from heaven and devour them*, Apoc. 20. 19. Let Davids practice be your pattern, argue the Churches deliverances from your own; if a man bestirre himself to quench a fire that hath taken hold of a remote cottage; how much more will he lay out himself to preserve his manner house? If a King send out his troops to secure a petty village from the Rovers; how much more will he draw up his whole Army to secure the Royall city? If the death of one Saint be precious; how much more precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of many precious Saints? O! God will be seen upon the mount, Caxtar-like, he will either finde or make a way for their escape; the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of every temptation, 2 Pet. 2. ver. 9. to fetch a Lot out of Sodom, and a Judah out of Babylon: The Churches extremitie is Gods opportunity:

portunity : when the *tale of bricks is doubled*, then *Moses* will come, as one saies.

2. Improve your providential preservations, by way of comfort in all your sufferings, for the name, and in the cause of Christ : the Lord tells you, tribulation in this world must be your portion, and it is a characteristic mark of a true believer, *to be hated by the world* ; they that have the *crown* in their eye, must bear the *cross* upon their backs : Now in the greatest trial of affliction for the Gospel, ye may draw forth, and *drink the wine of consolation* ; ye may comfort your spirits by a serious reflection upon your experiences, when ye remember what incomes ye had, what strength, what support, what revivings of soul, whilst ye lay upon such a bed of sickness, were exposed to such hazards, environed with such dangers, hedged in with such calamities ; when ye consider, how the Lord fetch'd you off, how seasonably Providence stepp'd in to your relief, and how wonderfully God appeared for your deliverance : Thus the Apostle argues in his own case, 2 Cor. 1. ver. 8. He tells the Church, a great trouble which befell him in *Asia*, it may be, that at *Ephesus*, *Acts* 19. ver. 23. or that mentioned, 1 Cor. 15. ver. 32. but probably some other, which Saint *Luke* mentions not, which trouble he aggravates by three notable circumstances ; 1. *We were pressed out of measure, above strength, in dangers*, as if the burthen of a strong man should be laid upon the shoulders of a weak child, their being no proportion betwixt weight and strength. 2. *We despaired even of life* ; had doubtfull thoughts arising in our hearts, that we should not come off with life ; *The most holy men have in this life their fits of unbelief*. 3. *We had the sentence of death within our selves, imminet*, the answer of death ; or, we passed the sentence of death upon our selves : I, but God, that *raiseth up the dead, delivered us from so great a death* : and what Inference doth faith make from hence ? why, it begat an holy affiance in him, that God would yet deliver him : as if he had said, I am yet to live in the world,

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Note.

I have not yet finished my course, nor fulfilled my Ministry, and I know, that bands and imprisonments for the Gospel, yea trouble, and persecution wait for me; I, but here's the benefit of experience; that God who supported me, when I was pressed out of measure, and above strength, revoked that sentence of death which I had passed upon my self, and delivered me from so great a death, he will yet deliver me: he will graciously come in with supplies, and support unto me, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against me: and why to confident, Paul? what bottomes this assurance? why, the name and nature of that God in whom he trusts, his name is *Jehovah*, I am, I was, and I am to come, or I will be: Now, if you say, there was danger: I reply, there was a God: If you say, there is danger; I answer, there is a God: and if you fear, there will be danger; I believe there will be a God: *Jehovah* answers to all these, and he that was *Jehovah* to me in my former, is *Jehovah* to me in my present, and will be *Jehovah* to me in all my future sufferings for the Gospel: He is I am in his nature, as being, yesterday, to day, and the same for ever: and he is, I am, in his attributes, and appearances for his people: He is, I am, in his love to them, he loves with an everlasting love, even unto the end: I am in his Covenant, which is everlasting, that he will be the God of his people unto death: And he is, I am in mine own experience, I have found him to be so to me; and therefore, I do comfortably argue my heart into an expectancy of help, from this God, and may easily say, *He hath delivered, he doth deliver, and he will deliver me*: The same argument may the Saints take up, by way of comfort, and hope to themselves, in times of persecution, when they consider their former deliverances, and Gods unchangeableness. And now give me leave to make some digression, in commending my thoughts, by way of comfort, to you, and to my self, in case we should be called forth, to a suffering condition: much hath been spoken, and much to purpose on this subject, yet all is little enough, and many of the Saints have found it to
in an hour of temptation.

I. Lay

1. Lay this upon your spirits, that your sufferings are upon you for God; *for his names sake, it is, ye are killed all the day long, and led forth as sheep unto the slaughter: ye suffer not as evil doers, or busibodies in other mens matters,* but for Religion sake, the Gospel sake, and for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, as the Apostle affirms of himself, *Acts 26.ver.6.* and therefore ye have good cause to gather up your spirits, and humbly expect, that God will stand by you, and strengthen you in the day of your trial: This made good *Mordecai* speak at that rate of assurance, *Hest. 4. ver. 14. Enlargement and deliverance shall arise to the Jews,* though *Heister* (the most visible and likely person to advocate their cause, lying in the bosome of *Abusuerus*, as his beloved Queen *(should bold her peace:* and this made the three worthies gird up the loyns of their mind, and quit themselves like men, yea, like brave men, in that great day of their trial, when, in the cause of God, they were threatened with a fiery furnace, *Dan. 3. ver. 17. Our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace:* Able? who questions the omnipotency of God? But, how know you, that he will deliver? why, as the eye of their faith was upon that promise, *Isa. 45. ver. 2. so it was also upon their former preservations;* they consider'd how eminently God had delivered them from the *Chaldeans* sword, bathed, yea, made drunk with the blood of many thousands, in that sad day of *Jerusalem*: how they had been kept alive in *Babylon*; what power, even to a Miracle, God had put forth in preserving health, and strength, and beauty to them, with pulse and water; and had given them an honourable standing in that strange Land; and therefore now they were brought forth, to bear witness against the Idolatry of that Nation, and to maintain the worship of the true and living God; they concluded their preservation, that God would own them, and the cause they suffered in, which made them speak with that gallantry of spirit, *He will deliver us out of thy hands, O King:* This account also *Daniel* gave of his preservation, *Dan. 6. v. 22.* My

My God hath sent his Angel, and hath sent the mouth of the Lions, that they have done me no hurt, forasmuch as before him, innocency was found in me : That is, he suffered as a righteous man, in a righteous cause. O sure it ought to be the care and wisdom of the Saints, not to provoke and exasperate wicked men, nor pull trouble on themselves, by a contempt of, or by any seditious practices against the persons of worldly Governours ; that when they come to a day of suffering, they may speak *Daniels words, That innocency is found in them before the Lord ;* and that before the Magistrate they have done no hurt, by transgressing any Law of man, which is consistent with the Lawes and honour of God : This will quiet the spirit, and bring in reserves of comforting hope, and support in the saddest day : How sweetly doth the Apostle argue, *1 Pet. 4. ver. 12, 13. unto the end,* to the comforting and staying up believers in the fiery trial ! Oh ! would you but sip often of this cordial wine, and spice it with your own experiences of God unto you, in former deliverances, how would it antidote against Apostacy in an evil day, and excellently prevent those sinkings of spirit, which the fear of suffering times produceth in you !

§. As there is hope of deliverance, when ye suffer upon the single Interest of Religion, and that with single hearts ; so also there wants not ground of hope, because the spirits of all the faithfull will be up in prayer : All the Saints will then hasten to the mount, and put in for your safetie, as being of a common concernment : They consider, that their lives are bound up in the lives of their brethren : The Apostle argues thus, *Heb. 13. ver. 3. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them that suffer adversity (especially for the Gospel) as being your selves also in the bodie :* This Chapter is called by a Divine, *The Chapter of Remembrances :* This is a good Memento, a seasonable Item to particular believers, Societies, and Churches, to remember, before the Lord, their Brethren that are in bonds, as being bound with them, in

in regard of sympathy and fellow-feeling, being members together of the same bodie, as also, in regard that the chain which is upon their brethren, may suddenlie be fastened to their bodies ; when a scare-fire is begun in a Town, every man will be readie with his bucket to quench it, because he fears the firing of his own house ; It was well said,

Tunc tua res agitur, paties cum proximis ardet :

and will be well applied by Believers, when they foresee their own sufferings, in their suffering brethren ; and labour to put a stop to that scare-fire, as hearing these words falling from the lips of their dying brethren, *bodie mihi, cras tibi* ; that which is my portion to day, will be thine to morrow, if the Lord do not stay the rage of bloudie men ; a scare-fire seldome ends in the first houses ; the Pestilence doth not often stay at the first family : nor persecution end in the death of one Saint ; if the Lord chain not up those mad dogs, they will break into the fold ; and make havock of the flock ; therefore the Saints that are in the bodie, and so are lyable to the same persecutions, will up and tugg hard with God for a suffering Believer, and that upon the account of their own safetie : Thus *Acts 12.5*. When *Peter* was kept in prison, *prayer was made without ceasing, of the Church, unto God for him* ; the whole Church prayed, and that without any intervals, until they had gotten *Peter* loose : And why so hard at work ? Oh, it was of common concernment ; It stood them in hand to do it ; for *Herod* stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the Church, *had killed James the brother of John with the sword : and because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to take Peter also*, and the Church knew not how soon the cup might be put into their hands ; and therefore they bestir'd themselves to obtain *Peters* freedom : There is alwaies a bafe spirit in Persecutors, to gratifie the people. Affliction, as it seldome comes single, so seldome is a single person : *Dorothea* relates, that on the same day, on which *Stephen* the Proto-Martyr suffered by stoning, two thousand other believers were in loc.

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put to death: This then will quicken up to prayer, and may comfort the Saints in their suffering estates; that prayer is made of the whole Church unto God for them, and that without ceasing? which, how prevalent it is, many notable returns do witness, *Melanchthon was much comforted, when he found certain women and children, in a corner, tugging hard by prayer for the reformation in Germany; and sure, were there more of this tugging in England, reformation would speed better amongst us, then it doth: if men would cry more unto God, and less against their Governours, we might sooner hope to see an establishment, and Religion in a better posture: which the Lord in mercy grant, and as the Jews cry for the temple, edificæ, edificæ, edificæ, cito, citius, citissime; so do I, that our eyes may see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, and that the Tabernacle of David may be built up amongst us, in our dates.*

3. This stayes up the Spirits of Believers, in suffering times; when they see, the *resistance is not unto blood*; that God so moderates and allayes the fury of men, that it extends not to the taking away life, as indeed, the Lord very often laies such a hand of restraint upon them, that they cannot exceed that Commission, which he gave unto Satan against Job, *all that he hath is in thine hand, but save his life*: late times have been witnesses to this, in the penalties, fines, confiscations, imprisonments, and exile of many precious Saints, but their lives were bid with Christ in God; the persecutors could not reach them: and no doubt the reason was this, God had set them their bounds (in his goodness to the Saints) which they could not pass: The sense of this made the believing Hebrews so courageous and resolved, *Heb. 10. ver. 32, 33. ye endured a great fight of afflictions, partly whilest ye were made a gazing stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, ye were reviled, and hoored at, and yet ye waded through all that mire, with cheerfulness; and partly whilst ye became companions of those that were so used: surely there was then farre more good fellowship among Christians,*

fians, upon a spiritual account, then now there is :
 How did the old Puritans of *England* cling together ?
 what sincere heartiness of affection was there among
 them ? how would they owe one another in Courts, and
 Conventicles, and hug a brother, notwithstanding all
 the dirt which was cast upon him ? but we are grown so
 fine-fingered now, that we will not touch a soiled gar-
 ment ; and so treat in our dress, that we will not suffer
 a spot upon our coat for Christ : It were well if we were
 so curious in Saint *James* his sense, to keep our selves un-
 spotted from the world *Jam. i. ver. ult.* or in *Jude* 's sense,
 next to hate the garments spotted with the flesh, *Jude, ver. 23.*
 nay farther, *Heb. 10. ver. 34. ye had compassion of me in my*
bonds, relieved an imprisoned and a silenced Minister :
 How did good Christians think it their honour, to be
Gatules, and entertainers of good Ministers ? Nay fur-
 ther, *ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods* ; this hath
 been made good also among us : and how cheerfully did
 Christians carry on their Profession under these suffer-
 ings : as when the hand of the Lord is upon a family, or
 town, if the sound and healthfull see that the deceased
 recover, and that the sickness is not mortall, this takes
 off much of that fear which began to seize upon them ;
 they keep their dwellings, and administer not unto the
 sick, in like manner, when persecution striketh at par-
 ticular Christians, and the Lord stayeth the rough winde of
fire and faggot ; in that day of his east winde, and that it is
in measure, not exceeding liberty, or some less penalties ;
 others do keep their ground, and shrink not from their
 colours : Oh lay up this Consideration, as a cordial
 by you, when the fear of persecutions begets a fainting
 in you : and as *Iesus Christ* said concerning *Lazarus* his
 distemper, *John 11. ver. 4. This sickness is not unto death,*
but for the glory of God, and that the son of God may be glo-
rified thereby : So when troubles, and persecutions arise,
 believe, and comfort your selves in this, that they shall
 not be unto death, but for the glory of God, and that the
 son of God might be glorified by them. Thus, when the

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Lord had given in *Peter*, as an answer of the Churches prayers, in so signal a manner, and had smote the Persecutor, with such a remarkable hand of Divine vengeance *Acts* 12.ver.24. *The word of G.d grew and multiplied*: the seed lay a while buried under earth, and the blade that began to put out, was a little nup'd, and hung the head: *Herod's* persecution was a blasting wind and frost; it did a little stock the wheat, and made it change the colour: but when *Peter* was delivered, and *Herod* destroyed; whose death was rather, *precationis opus quam morbi*, the fruit of the Churches seeking, then his own sickness, as was said of *Arinus* the Heretick, who was prayed to death by *Alexander*, that good Bishop of *Constantinople*: then the word grew, not onely the blade, but to the ear, yea, to the ripe wheat in the ear; Knowledge grew, Faith grew, Hope grew, Profession grew, Godliness grew, and Comfort grew: nay, the Word did not onely magnifie in the hearts of those, where it was rooted already, but even multiplied in the Conversion of many others, these gracious actings of custodient mercy, being as the warm sun, and growing showers unto the earth: Thus, *Phil.* 1. ver.12. *Paul* tells the *Philippian* brethren, that the things which happened unto him [viz.] the troubles and persecutions, have fallen out rather to the furtherance of the Gospel, they helped forward the Gospel in the fruitfull Profession of it, and he gives this as an evidence of it, ver.14. *because many of the brethren of the Lord walked more confident by his bonds, and became much more bold to speak the word without fear: at his first answer before Nero, no man stood with him, but all forsook him*; the brethren were cow'd and crestfallen, stood alooff off, as fearing the rage of that cruel Tyrant, who *orientem fidem Rome cruentavit*, embred the rising Gospel with the bloud of its Professours, enastring a bloody decree, that whosoever confessed himself, to be a Christian, should be put to death, as a convicted enemy of mankind: Hence he is called by one, the dicatour of the condemnation of Christians: But when they say, that the Lord stood by him, and delivered him out of

of the mouth of the Lion, 2 Tim. 4. ver. 17. and that he had obtained, *liberam custodiam*, freedom to go abroad with his keeper ; nay, that he had hired an house in Rome, and received all that came unto him ; *preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concerned the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him* ; that he was neither slain, or shut up, nor yet silenced : then they took courage, and not onely professed, but *preached the Gospel without fear*, and scattered that precious seed within the walls of Cæsar's pallace. Thus the Lord governs the sufferings of his people, when not unto bloud, to the *strengthening of weak bands, which hands down, and the feeble knees, and to the making of straight paths for their feet, that the lame are not turned out of the way, but rather healed*, Heb. 12. ver. 12, 13. There's much healing mercy to weak believers, who like *Mephibosheth*, are lame of their feet, as to profession, and are apt to get a wrench in rough ways, when the Lord stayes the rage of men, and brings off his suffering Saints, with safety both of cask and conscience. Lay up this Consideration against a day of trial : And let me add further,

4. That if the Lord should leave you in the hands of bloody persecutors, and should give them a full commission, not onely against your liberties, but your lives also, yet even your death would be life unto the dead, in a *saving sense unto others* : this hath been often witnessed, that *sanguis Martyrum est semen Ecclesie*, the blood of Martyrs is the seed of the Church. Many Believers have arose out of the ashes of one dying *Phœnix* : Indeed the Gospel is the *white seed*, wherewith the Lord soweth the great field of the world, having ploughed and prepared it by the law ; and here and there a Church groweth up, in this and that Nation : and here and there a Believer springeth up in this or that family and town. This is *Dedicator* the most usuall seed, *faith cometh by bearing, and bearing damnation's by the word preached*, Rom. 10. ver. 17. Yet the Lord hath *Christians* a red seed, which sometimes he sprinkles the field withall, *rum, rum,* and

and that's the blood of the martyred Saints : which also through a secret blessing-power, is fruitfull both to the gain and growth of many souls : *Ecclesia totum mundum sanguine & oratione convertit*, the Church converts the whole world with her praying and bleeding : as the lilly is increased with her own juice that flow's from it, so is the Church with her own blood : *Julian saw this, which made him spare the lives of some Christians, not out of mercy to them, but out of malice to the Lord Jesus, lest by cutting them off he should cast seed into the ground, to bring forth a fuller harvest* : O did ye but work this consideration home upon your hearts, how would it comfort you in an evil day ! How would it render you strangely willing, not only to suffer joyfully the spoiling of your goods ; but also the spilling of your blood, that so ye may minister seed unto the Lord and encrease his harvest ? what is it, besides the glory of God, and the discharge of duty with comfort and conscience, which quickens up faithful Ministers to spend themselves and strength in the work of the Gospel ? is it not that they may gain over souls unto the Lord ? that they may bring sinners home to God ? and what encourageth to this ? doth not the hope and expectancy, that *they shall shine as the starres for ever and ever* ? Dan. 12. ver. 3. and not onely as starres of the lesser magnitude, but even as *the Sun in the kingdom of their father*, Matth. 13. ver. 43. O ! to what an height of glory shall a poor clod of clay be advanced ! How shall he be the object of divine love, the wonder of Angels, and the envy of devils to all eternity ! and that the saving of souls contributes much, through grace, to this glory, that quoration in *Daniel* doth fully speak, not to the attainment of it by way of merit, but to the enlargement of it by way of mercy : Now how much of argument is there in this consideration to periwade Ministers to breathe, and Christians to bleed out their lives to winne souls unto God ? give me leave to apply that passage, *Psal. 126. ver. 5, 6. To this purpse, though it bear another sense, they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. I know if ye die*

die Martyrs in the presence of your relations, ye will sow your blood and lives in the tears of wives and children (tears are a tribute that living friends doow to the dead upon the account of nature and grace) and if your death be a *Martyrium creentum*, a bleeding Martyrdome, it will be a wet seeds-time with you; I but ye shall reap in joy; it will be matter of joy unspeakable and full of glory to you, if the seed ye sow takes rooc to bring in souls to God: There's joy in heaven at the conversion of one sinner: O if a blessed Martyr (when in heaven and freed from that body of sin, which hinders the soul in its purest acts of joy) should know what a precious seed of grace, through grace, his blood was to some poor sinner; how they received life from his death, what rejoicing would this bring forth in him, if that fulnesse of joy in the presence of God will admit of any encrease: however, he that goeth away *weeping, bearing precious seed*, (or his seed-basket) with him, shall doubtlesse come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him: O the great day will be a day of solemn triumph unto you, when ye shall bring those Saints, yea sheaves of Saints, which were gathered in, and rooted to life and fruitfulness in your blood. Come on brave souls, let the sense of former deliverance fortifie your spirit against a day of persecution, and adde to them this consideration we now propoſe, and draw up gallantly after the pattern of your great Lord and maſter, *H. b. 12. ver. 2. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of your faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God in glory*, or of the throne of God; it is clear, that the manhood of Christ, or the man Christ Jesus, considered in an abstracted notion from the Godhead, feared death, *Heb. 5. ver. 7*: at least the ignominy, shame, and sorrow of the crosse; therefore we hear him once and again praying, *that if it was possible that cup might passe from him*, *Matth. 26. ver. 39. and yet for the joy which was set before him he endured this crosse, and despised the shame* it brought along with it; for malefactors

hours of the highest rank were by the Roman Law nailed to the Cross; hence Isa. 53. ver. 9. the Prophet tells us, *he made his grave with the wicked*; that is, suffered the death of the wicked, the word imports ungodly, lewd and turbulent, irreligious towards God, debauch 'em manners, and turbulent in the Common-wealth; which sort of men, David by the word of the Lord doomes to destruction, *Psal. 9. ver. 17. The wicked shall be turned into hell.* And now, though the man Christ Jesus (who is God blessed for evermore, the Lord of glory) teared death, and was put to that shameful and tormenting death, the death of Hell-birds; yet he endured it, and despised the shame of it, having his eye upon *the joy set before him*; and what was that joy? Sure, much of that joy consisted in his completing the work of his Redemption, in bringing home the Elect unto God, as *Isa. 53. ver. 11. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied,* Hebr. shall sit down with acquiescence of spirit, shall dwell there; he shall receive joy and satisfaction from the saving of sinners; as a man doth, that dwelleth in his own house, situated with the best advantage of profit and delightfulness: It was the saturity and satisfaction of his soul; and the reason thereof may be gathered from *John 12. ver. 32. where he says, and I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men after me*: he knew there would be such a magnetick vertue in his death, which would attract all men, to wit, multitudes of men and women to believe in him: The Spirit being to be sent forth, and the Gospel being to be universally preached, after his death: O then, ye believing ones, look unto this Jesus, and look unto this joy, which in some measure will be given in unto you, by the attractiveness of your deaths to draw soules to Christ; and settle this upon your hearts, that, though your blood may be spilt as water upon the ground, yet by the wise appointment of a gracious God, it may be as seed, intrumentally not meritoriously (for in this sense onely the blood of Jesus is) of life and grace to poor sinners: and be not so streiten-ed in your bowels

to the Lord Jesus, or to your poor brethren, as to deny an handfull of seed (if called unto it) to encrease the great harvest. I shall subjoin but one Consideration more; namely,

5. That tis an honorable advancement to be called out by Christ to suffer for him ; a vouchsafement of grace, and that in a way of special favour to die a Martyr, a right Martyr : The Apostles *Acts* 5. ver. 41. rejoiced that *Magna est* they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of *Evangelii* Christ, *ut scilicet* that in a way of grace they had this *quo intelligimus omnia* honour put upon them, that they were reputed as *deberi* persons worthy to wear an honourable scar in their suits *Di* ffecta for Christ, though they were only scourged : this *Electio*. made *Paul* and *Silas* to meray at midnight, that they sung *Psalmes*, probably of praise to God, that they were counted worthy to be shut up in the inner prison, and to have their feet made fast in the stocks, for the testimony of Jesus, *Acts* 16. v. 25. Hence he tells the *Philippians Phil.* 1. ver. 29. to you it is given, *exaltatio* : as it is a grant of grace, of rich grace, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on *h m*, though that be an high honour ; but also to suffer for his sake : as if he had said, the Lord hath granted you this honour, that ye shall believe on him, when as he leaves thousands of your acquaintance, country-men, yea Betters, upon a worldly score, in unbelief : This is worth your acceptance, our admiration : this calls for full returns of praise and thankfulness, but this is not all, that this grant of grace conferrers, by way of honour, upon you : for ye, ye that are believers, shall also be sufferers, be Martyrs for Christ : and sure the crown of Martyrdom, is a glorious crown, and every soul won over to God by a dying Martyr, will be as an Orient pearl, and precious Diamond in his crown, of far more value then that Adamant, found about Charles Duke of Burgundy, slain by the Switzers, at the battel of Nantz, sold for twenty thousand Duckets, and placed, as it is said, in the Popes tripple crown. Ob, what foretastes of glory, what ravishments of soul, have many of the blessed Martyrs had, in their suffering for Christ ! Hold Lord, stay thine hand, I can bear no more: like

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like weak eyes that cannot bear too great a light : and oh what thankfulness and joy of heart have many expressed ! *It is the greatest promotion God gives in this world, to suffer :* saies Father Latimer, *I thank God most heartily for this hour :* Mr. Glover wept for joy of his imprisonment : *God forgive me my unthankfulness for this great exceeding mercy ; that among so many thousands, he chuseth me to be one, in whom he will suffer,* saies Mr. Bradford, Martyr : *I am the unmostest man for this high office, that ever was appointed to it,* saies Mr. Sanders : *Such an honour is it,* saies John Carlisle, Martyr, *as the greatest Angel in heaven is not permitted to have ; God forgive me my unthankfulness :* Oh then, what the Apostle saies, Heb. 12. ver. 1. *As the clove, and Epilogue of that Martyrology, to say I, Wherefore seeing you are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily belets you, and run with patience the race which is set before you :* Yeknow not what times ye may be called unto : what qualmes of fears may be upon your spirits, and what temptations to self pity from Sathan, and the flesh may then seize upon you : Therefore store up Provision afore hand, lay up Promises, lay up Presidencies, lay up Arguments, and lay up these considerations, by an unworthy hand offered unto you ; keep a freshense of former deliverances, and improve them by way of comfort, and support in persecuting times : Argue with David, Psal. 9. ver. 13. *Have mercy on me O Lord, consider my troubles, which I suffer of them that hate me,* and probably, in the cause of Religion, thou that livest me up from the gates of death, *ex presentissimo, certissimo interitu*, from present, and certain dangers, which shewed me, the gravegaping for me ; and therefore, raise up your spirits, and believingly say, as vers. 6, 7, 8, 9. *O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end,* the date of thy commission against us is expired, and shall never be renewed, and thy destruction from the Lord is irrevocable, and eternal ; but the Lord shall endure for ever, *vivi, regnante Christo*--- Christ lives, and reigns, and shall judg the world in righteousness ; and

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will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.--- Read and enlarge these, and the following Verses in your own thoughts.

3. Improve the consideration of temporal mercies by way of support, under all your saddest and forest temptations from the *wicked one* : If the manchild (Christ Jesus in the spirit) be formed in you, and any actings of grace be brought forth by you, the great red Dragon will wait to devour you ; *He is your adversary*, an inveterate enemy ; he owes you an old grudge, and will be revenged on the heel, for the bruising of his head, and that by your head : It is his Interest to bestirre himself ; If Christ gaineth, he loseth : There's a wedge loose with him, when the word findes a welcome in a sinners heart : There's not a soul brought home to Christ, but is fetch'd out of the Devils quarters, not a convert gained, but is wonne by Christ in a set batrel : *Sathan sadly speaks those words of John the Baptist, John 3. ver. 30. he must increase, but I must decrease* ; The sea is in continual revolution, when it is high water in one place, its low water in some other ; : so when it is high tide in such a nation, country or town, its low water with Sathan : Christs gain is Sathans loss ; He knows how Christs, and his own affairs go on in the world, who gains and who loses, and that his loss is Christs gain : and therefore he tries all his tricks, improves every method, and turns every stone, to keep his own ground, to man his own forts, maintain his own principality, and withall to gain soules to himself, to fetch them off from the embraces of Christ : nay, he is so bold and daring, that though he sees the actings of godlines from the Saints, and findes a work of grace in them, (which he doth find by those strong repulses the heart gives to his secret temptations) (which are his spies, sent forth to search the land, by whom he learns what frame the heart is in) : Though he sees his strong holds beat down, and defaced by a conquering spirit, though he observes the stream running in another channel, and that the soul is now in armes against him, believing,

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believing, repenting, mourning, praying, watching, hearing, and all against him; yet he will play an after game, and not be wanting in skill or will to reduce the soul: And he ploughs in hope, and sows in love, for he cannot read *the Lambs book of life*, he knows not the decrees of God, they are Secret to him untill death brings forth a discovery, and the soul is taken up to God, and therefore, though he fears such or such a Saint, that is gone off from his quarters, is under electing grace, yet he hopes the contrary: Yee see how busie he was with *Josua* the High Priest, *Zech.* 3. ver. 1. and how hard he pressed upon him, probably, not without some hopes to have got him, or the day against him, until *Christ rebuked* him, and told him, *he was a brand plucked out of the fire*, singled out by the purpose of the eternal Father, to be a vessel of grace, then he cleared away, and left him: Yet, as our Saviour, probably, *but for a time*, *Luke* 4. 13. nay, though he should read their names writ in heaven, though he knows the immutability of Christs love, that *whom he loves once, he loves to the end*, *John* 13. ver. 1. and of Gods counsel, that *his gifts and calling are without repentance*, irreversible, *Rom.* 11. ver. 29. yet such is his malice, and so great is his rage against the Saints, that, if he cannot keep them out of *Canaan*, hee'l sting them, and scratch them in the *wilderness*, before they get thither: though he cannot put out their light, *hee'l be a thief in their candle, to snail away much of their comfort*: though he cannot reach them in heaven, he will reckon with them on earth: if they must to heaven, he will send them cripples thither; he will have a leg or an arm out of joint or broken, or he will want of his will: some way or other he will vex them, buffet, and disquiet them: many long stories, and sad ones too, may be told of his exploits against the Saints; my own experience can witness, something of his trains and treacheries, of his malice and the Lords mercy, of his black designs, and of the Lords gracious support and disappointments, blessed be his holy name, and adored for ever be his goodness: O

O then, *in the name of the Lord, lift up your banners*, buckle on your armour, stand with your weapons in your hands, ready to receive and charge your adversary; and that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, gather up your experiences, of God, and meditate upon the great things God hath done for you, in the day of your outward troubles: what that power, that wisdom, that goodness of the Lord hath been, which hath appeared unto you, and engaged for you in the time of your great distresses; and what those streights and distresses, how sharp, and how pressing, from which the Lord hath wrought your deliverance. And then go to your spiritual Logick, frame such an argument as this, The Lord gives help to his distressed Saints in their outward troubles, therefore also will he help them in their inward temptations; now if Satan shall argue, that, God doth not give in succours to the Saints in their outward troubles; it's true, they, and it may be, ye had help and deliverance, but it came not from God; when ye were cast upon such and such sick-beds, that ye despaired of life, and your friends gave you up for dead, then the Physician came, and by his great skill administered such physick, which wrought your recovery; or when ye were in such streights, the liberality of your friends relieved you, or in such exigencies, the wisdom and potency of your allies brought you off, God was not seen in all your deliverances: what will you do now? why, your business is to secure this sort by summoning your experiences, and placing them upon the works: saying that ye beheld the face of God in such deliverances, that your help was onely from on high, that men and means stood off, and came not in, no, not for a reserve; or though men and means were seen upon the wall, yet God acted by the instrumentality of them, though Christians were consulted with, yet the blessing of God upon the means brought forth the cure: be sure ye own God, in every preservation, how visible and potent, soever creature-helps are or have been; entrench your faith in

this perfwasion, that whatfoever fecondary caufes contributed, the chief agency was from God. If Sathan beat you out of this trench, he will foon take your ftandard, and rout your whole army: but if ye make good this ground, if ye have the advantage of the hill, ye are out of gunshot, all his murthering pieces will not reach you: ye may then quiet your fpirits in any affault, when ye can fay in your greateft diftreffes, as *Paul*, 2 *Tim.* 4. ver. 16, 17. *No man ftood with me, but all men forfook me, notwithstanding, the Lord ftood with me, and strengthened me: Here's a clear appearance of God: Or with Daniel, My God bath sent his Angel, and ftopped the mouthes of the Lions, that they have not hurt me: or with David, in my diftrefs, I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me: Pſal. 120. ver. 1. And furely, fome of the Saints deliverances have been fuch, (I can inftance in mine own) which were fingly and fignally wrought by God: But now, in other cafes, where inftruments have been ufed (as many fuch cafes there have been) be fure you give them, even all created helps, the name of inftruments, and own God as the principal Agent, that his arm moved every wheel, and his hand guided and wrought with every tool: do this, and ye are well enough: *Pſal.* 77. ver. 20. *Thou leddeſt thy people like a flock by the hand of Moſes and Aaron*, to wit, through the the red fea. --- *Moſes* ſtruck the waters with his rod, I, but God divided the fea. --- thou leddeſt, is onely applicable to God, and by *Moſes*, onely intimates an inftrument; fo *Pſal.* 88. ver. 65, 66. *Then the Lord awakened as one out of ſleep, or like as a mighty man that ſhouteth by reaſon of wine; and he ſmote the enemies in the binder parts, he putteth them to a perpetuall ſhame: However the army is marſhalled, the ſtroak is from God; the horſe is prepared againſt the day of battel, but ſafeſtie is of the Lord*, *Prov.* 21. ver. 31. But ſuppoſe Sathan ſhould deny the conſequence of the Major (for he is *Aſſiduous*, a ſubtle opponent) and argue though God did deliver in temporals, yet he will not in ſpirituals: Who is he that ſhall deliver out of my hands? He make you know, that ye are *wreſtling**

not

not with *fleſh and blood*, (men that are your matches) but with *principalties, and powers*, who are much above your match, there is *impar congreſſus*; a great diſparity in ſtrength and wiſdome, and all things between me and you: What are all the powers of the world, to the *God of this world*? what are all the dark plots of men, to the projects of the *Prince of darkneſs*? What are all the whiſſing waters to the great *Apollion*, who is the deſtroyer? why, anſwer, *greater is he that is in us, then he that is in the world*, 1 John 4. 4. thy power, Sathan, is but a limited power; Chriſt our Redeemer hath thy chain in his hand, thou canſt not break one link of it, nor paſs one hairs breadth beyond thy boundaries: beſides, *Thou canſt have no power againſt me, except it be given thee from above*: If thy Com-miſſion hath not paſſ'd the Signet-Office in heaven, it is but a blank piece of parchment: Nay farther, thy head, and thy heart, and thy hand too, have been all at work in thoſe miſchiefs, that were plotted and acted againſt us, and yet thou ſeeſt, we have a ſure footing in peace, and ſafety: when we were under water, we had never come up again, but had been quackned in the deep, if the ſtrength of thine arm could have kept our heads down. when we were ſhut up in priſon, we had never come forth, if thy bolts and locks could have made ſalt the doors: when we were under the power of our enemies, we had never come of wick life, if thy malice could have turned the points of their weapons againſt us; But *God made us to be pitied of all thoſe that carried us away captive*, *Pſal. 106. ver. 46.* Our ſickneſſes had been mortal, if thou couldſt have ſpilt the potion, or ſtirred up the humours, to have encreaſed the malignancy of the diſtempers: but *in all things wherein thou didſt deal proudly, God was above thee*; and he that rebuked thee in thine inſtruments, will rebuke thee alſo in thine agency: He that defeated thee as worldly Governors, will defeat thee as ſpiritual wickedneſs alſo: That wiſdome, goodneſs, and power, which ſecured our temporalls againſt thee, will much more ſecure their ſpirituals? If thou couldſt not ſpill our

our blood, much less shalt thou be able to split our souls: If thou couldst not take away our credit, we are sure thou shalt not take away our crown : If our goods were out of thy reach, much more shall our graces and our glory be : *He that delivered us out of the mouth of the Lion, will deliver us from every evil work, and preserve us to his heavenly kingdom.* But further, if Sathan shall argue, Who doubts the power of God ? or who disputes against his omnipotency ? but wherefore should God put forth his Almightyness, to secure you against me ? what claim can ye make to that mercy and goodness ye speak of ? let your reply be, *Gal. 1. ver. 4. That Christ gave himself for your sinnes, that he might deliver you from this present evil world, according to the will of God, even your father : And that sin and Sathan are they that make this present world evil ; all evils flow from them.* If therefore, God our father willed the death of his Son, to deliver us from this present evil world ; he willed his death, to deliver us from thee, and that bastard brat of thine, sin also : And more, *John 14. ver. 30. The Lord Jesus said of thee, the Prince of this world hath nothing in me, nor any power over me ; and if not in Christ, then neither in us, at least, not over us, so that thou shalt be able to undo us, and destroy us : We are one with Christ, be is the head, and we the members ; and we can lay a Gospel claim (which is a good title) to all Christ, and to all of Christ, which is communicable to the creature : The Apostle gives us good warrant, 1 Cor. 3. ver. 21. All things are yours, and why ? ye are Christs, yea, so Christs, as that Christ is yours : a relative propertie, as is between husband and wife : --- Hence, 1 Cor. 1. ver. 30. He is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, as if the Apostle had said, the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, which are in, and wrought by Jesus Christ, are by deed of gift, through grace, made over unto us : So then, against thy wiles, and stratagems, and cunning methods, O Sathan, *We have the wisdom of Christ,* (which is ours for direction) to secure us : Against thy accumulations,*

tions, enditements, and charges for sin, we have the *righteousness of Christ* (which is ours for justification) to acquit us, against those heart-defilements, corruptions, and concupiscences, wherewith thou wouldst foil us, and foil us, we have the *holiness of Christ* (which is ours for Sanctification) in some measure to defend us : and against thy might and malice, treachery and tyranny, we have the *kingly office of Christ*, his authority, his omnipotency (which are ours as to Redemption) to protect us : Oh this, this name of the Lord, thus displayed and believed upon, is a *strong tower in the hour of temptation* : All the batteries of Hell cannot make a breach in it : Now then, get into this hold, shut the doors upon you, and let your temporal preservations be as locks and bars to forbid Sathans entrance : Lift up your shield of Faith, embossed with your own experiences; and wherever that Lion shall roar upon you, give him battle, fight him upon his own ground, besteadfast in the faith, keep true to your own experiences, and believe without wavering the unchangeableness of Gods nature, and Attributes, and the Yea and Amen of all his Promises.

Improve the sense of eminent mercies and deliverances by way of comfortable assurance to your selves in all your castings down, and fears of your eternal welfare : But I shall speak little and warily on this head, having touched upon it already, in a foregoing use ; and least presumption should get up, and carnal Professions should kindle a fire (fetching fuel from this passage) and compass themselves about with sparks, walking in the light of this fire, and in the sparks which they have kindled, which, notwithstanding all these confidencies, their doom is pronounced by the Lord himself, that they shall ly down in sorrow, *Isa. 50. ver. 11.* Indeed this humour is very rank; Ministers cannot with all their pains, preach, and pray, and print it down : And therefore I direct this discourse to the children of the new birth, who have the witness within themselves of the work and truth of grace; such may

may fetch much comfort from the appearances of God unrotliem, in a day of distress: they may argue, Is not the life more worth them meat, and the body then raiment? Is not the soul more precious then name, credit, limbs, and life? Have the mercies of God been soignally remarkable upon a temporal, and shall they not be much more upon a saving account? was the red sea dried up? a pathway made through the wilderness, *Jordan* made fordable, and the *Cananites* slain even with hailstones from heaven, and all this to give Israel possession of an earthly *Canaan*; and shall not the outgoings of grace, and outstretching of power be much more glorious, to bring us to heavenly *Canaan*? to that City which hath foundations, and walls, whose builder and maker is God? Oh! reason up faith and hope to an expectancy of after blessedness, by considering the blessed in present comforts, present succours, and present deliverances. I shall onely propose the presidency of Saint *Paul*, under a remarkable preservation, even from the Tyrant *Nero*, 2 *Tim.* 4. ver. 17, 18. I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lyon --- and the Lord will deliver me out of every evil work, and will preserve me to his heavenly kingdom: You may find much of this in *David*, arguing from temporalls to eternals; observe that *Psal.* 23. ver. 6. I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever; which sometimes is taken for heaven, that upper house, that house of State, in which Christ sayes, *John* 14. ver. 2. *There are many mansions*; Saint *Paul* calls it, 2 *Cor.* 5. ver. 1. *an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*: --- so *Psal.* 17. ver. ult.

*Domus mansio-
nestatis.*

Oh, in all your sinkings of spirit, let the sense of mercy received be as a cordial unto you, and assure your selves, that, if in famine, sword, peril, nakedness, &c. ye have been more then conquerours, through Christ that loveth you, get up your hearts to this perwasion, that neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor bright nor depth, nor any

any other creature shall be able to separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord, Rom. 8. ver. 37, 38, 39. or hinder you of heavens happiness, which is the fruit of Gods Eleſting love, and the purchase of the Redeeming love of Jesus Chriſt your Lord : O then, comfort one another with theſe words. ---

I am come now to the fifth and laſt Uſe : Is it ſo, that the beſt of Saints are often brought into ſuffering conditions ? that their afflictions are ſharp, and violent ? that the appearances of God are eminent, and immediate to their help in the day of their diſtreſs ? Is this a truth attelled by the experience of Saints in all ages ? and cannot their enemies deny this ? why then here is a rod for the backs of fools, a ſharp reproof for the profane and carnal world, in 3 Particulars.

1. It reproves them for their uncharitable cenſuring of the ſuffering Saints ; what more uſual, then for wicked men to entertain hard thoughts, and let fly in harſh ſpeeches againſt the people of God in diſtreſs ; meaſuring their ſinnes by their ſufferings, and if their calamities exceed others, their iniquities exceed them alſo ; laying down this falſe poſition : that the greateſt ſufferers are ſinners ; and that, when the rod is moſt, the wrath of God is moſt alſo ; not conſidering that of the Apoſtle, *Heb. 12. 6. Whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth*, laying down an exemption from the rod, as a note of Baſtardie ; or that, *Apoc. 3. 19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten* : This was praſtified by *Shimei* in that great day of *Dauids* diſtreſs, when he fled from his rebellious ſon, *2 Sam. 16. 7, 8. Come out, come out thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial, the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blond of the houſe of Saul, in whoſe head thou haſt reigned, and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Abſalom thy ſon, and behold, thou art taken to thy miſchief*, or, taken into thy wickedneſs, becauſe thou art a murderer, as ſome Tranſlations read it, and as agrees with the *Hebrew* : This was the Interpretation that *Eliphaz* put upon *Job's* ſufferings, *Job 4. 7, 8. Remember*

*Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent ? or where were the righteous cut off ? even as I have seen ; they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same ; thereby wounding him in his holiness, and heart-sincerity ; yea, upon the matter, charging him to be a son of Belial, and that because God was now writing such bitter things in the blood of his cartel, servants, and children, yea, in black characters of fore displeasure upon his own body. It was not much to be heeded, that the Barbarians fastened the guilt of murder upon Paul, because the viper fastened upon his hand, Acts 28. ver. 4. But that the viper should fasten upon the hearts of men and women under the same common Profession with us, that the venom of the old Serpent should swell to such a degree of cursing, and uncharitableness, is much to be lamented, and doubtless, some will smart for these hard speeches, when *Jesus Christ shall come with ten thousands of his saints*, Jude, ver. 14, 15. Then shall they know the English of that Text, 1 Pet. 1. 6. and the ends of God in afflicting his precious ones.*

2. For their unjust charge of Hypocrisie upon them : who so envious as evil men ? who are so much the objects of their envy as the godly are - and why is their malice so much against them ? surely, it is upon the account of Religion, of discerning Grace and holiness : This was the seed of the first quarrel betwixt man and man ; this was that which made Cain a fratricide, and wherefore *slew he his brother ? because his own works were evil, and his Brothers righteous*, 1 John 3. 12. and now, though the laws of men, and the power of God restrain wicked men from murdering the godly, yet they shed the blood of their souls, and slay their sincerity, by charging Hypocrisie upon them, which is the highest degree of murder, and that which the seed of Cain shall one day pay dearly for. But what makes them so bold to call the Saints Hypocrites ? what colour have they for such a charge ? or what ground have they, thus to traduce the sincere servants of the Lord ? why, the false glosses they put upon the

the humbling Providences of God, they expound un-
foundness of body in them, to an infallible Evidence
of an unsound spirit, rottenness in their bones to be the
proper fruit of a rotten heart, and that the voice of the
Lord, in their present sufferings, doth fully speak all
their professing, praying, watching, waiting, humility
and holiness, to be but mere dissembling: what do the
arguing and deportments of *Job's* three friends import?
and in special, that passage of *Bildad*, *Job* 8. 6, 7. to the
end of the Chapter, *If thou wert pure and upright, surely
now, he would awake for thee, and make thy righteousness
prosperous*; What doth this *Hypothesis*, this uncharitable
Supposition import, but a secret charge of Hypocrisy?
may it not be sented thus? ah *Job*, thou wantest that
heart-purity, and heart-uprightness, which renders the
Persons and services of Gods sincere ones acceptable in
his sight; thou hast had indeed, a great deal of the name
and form of godliness; thou hast carried it fairly and
plausibly before men, and hast purchased to thy self the
reputation of a godly person in the world, but alas! the
heart-searching God, *whose eyes are as a flame of fire*, ten
thousand times brighter then the light of the Sun, hath
searched thy reins and weighed thy spirit, and having
followed the streams of thy devotion to the fountain,
hath found, that Hypocrisy hath been the head, and Self
the spring of all thy services; thou hast but serv'd thy
self upon God, thy Religion hath been but mercenary,
and thou hast been his servant onely because he gave
thee good wages; therefore hath this calamitous condi-
tion overtaken thee, and *the Lord doth not awake to thy
help*, which he would certainly do, if he found thy heart
upright in his wayes; This he confirms by the observa-
tion of the fathers, who were men of great age, great
wisdom, and great experience in the world, *ver. 8, 9, 10.*
and that by three elegant similitudes, *ver. 11. from the
russ, which cannot grow up without mire: 2. from the flag,
which cannot grow without water; both which ver. 12. being
removed to a drie unwatered soil, do die and wither at*

the root, so *ver. 13. are the ways of all that forget God, and the hypocrites hope shall perish*; being at a distance from the fountain of living water, and having the root of his confidence in himself: A third Similitude is laid down *ver. 16, 17. He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden, his roots are wrapped about the heap, and*

Succosus

ex Tremel.

There being influences of the Sun, and spreadeth his roots, receiving in many gardens of fountains of stone. --- comparing an Hypocrite to a green and sappy tree, which grows up under the warm secret moisture from the garden-springs; yet the ax shall be brought, and cut it up, --- being like the *Cypariss*, which bears small berries, and bitter leaves, that yield an ill smell before God, and therefore he cuts him up, and casts him out of his garden; this further appears to be that, which *Bildad* drives at, and wherewith he chargeth given by *Ex-Job*, upon the account of his present sufferings, because,

Ver. 20. he affirms that God will not cast away a perfect however, all man; neither will he help the evil doers: That the perfect man in Scripture language (however otherwaies glossed upon by some in our dayes) denotes a sincere servant of the Lord, one whose heart is upright with the Lord, is clear in many passages; now, what measure *Job* had from *Bildad* and his companions, the same have many of the suffering Saints had from the censorious and carnal world, and that upon the same grounds: but, be wise, O ye snarling doggs, be instructed, ye blind Barbarians, call not a suffering Saint, because in distress, an hypocrite, for they are branches bearing fruit in *Christ*, and the great vine-dresser doth but purge them by affliction (cutting off their luxuriant branches) that they may bring forth more fruit, *Joh. 15. 2*. Take heed, ye sin not by such uncharitable censures against the generation of Gods children, lest his wrath be kindled against you, and ye perish in the way; even in this your way of traducing and slandering the footsteps of Gods anointed ones; and lest the Lord speak suddenly against you, as he did against *Aaron* and *Miriam*, in the quarrel of *Moses*, *Numb. 12. 8*. and say, *How were you not afraid to speak against my suffering servants.*

3. For that definitive sentence which they pass upon the Saints, when under suffering, as though they were cast off by God, and delivered over by Justice unto destruction : indeed, wicked men are very peremptory in their conclusions against the Lords people, and when they see load laid upon them by the Lord, in some calamitous estate, they presently determine upon the question, *that they are forsaken of God* : Thus *David* in *Psal. 71. 7.* brings in his enemies encouraging themselves in their furious attempts against him, under this assurance, *that God had cast him off.* Hear at what a rate they speak, *God hath forsaken him, persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him* ; But, why so confident, that *David* is now one of the forlorn hope ? that his condition is desperate and irreparable ? have you not seen what stormes he hath borne up under, and sailed against ? have you forgot the formidable armies he hath brook through, and brook ? why should you think, that *Abalom's* Rebellion, or *Sheba's* Mutiny (for it is conceived, the *Psalms* was penned upon one of those occasions) should cast such an old, and experienced Souldier into a lost condition ? O ! God was wont to go out with him, and his good presence was, *as a munition of Rocks unto him*, whereby he became not onely safe, but successfull in all his enterprises ; but now, the case is altered, *David* stands alone, he fights with his own arme, *God hath now forsaken him* : but, how know you, that he is in a deserted estate ? O, 'tis clear, and legible in those fore distresses that are upon him, hee's a man mark'd out to ruine, *God will not deliver him*, and thus deridingly did the wicked scoff at *David*, *Psal. 22. 7, 8.* Contemptus applied by the Evangelist to the Lord Jesus, *Matth. 27. 39.* *p. pali ludi-* when he was nailed to the cross, *all they that see me in this bria & oppressed and calamitous condition, laugh me to scorn, they probus des-* shoot out the lip, *they shake the head, saying, He trusted on claratur.* the Lord, that he would deliver him ; let him deliver him, *-seeing he delighted in him : a gauling Sarcasim : reproachfull* language ; Good God ! how great is thy patience to pardon, at least to pass over, for the present, such blasphemous

mous scoffs against thy self, and against thy son ! and if
 it was done thus to the green tree, *what shall be done to the
 drie ? Post Carthaginem, vinci neminem puduit.* Let not the
 Saints be overmuch troubled at the taunts of the wicked,
 when the Son of God himself suffered the same measure
 from them : but stay : *speak no more so proudly, O ye un-*
godly ones ! do you think the tender Mother has cast
 off all care, all bowels, all love, because she lets her
 helpless Infant lie crying in the cradle a while ? no, no,
 she ! come, and take it up, kiss it, lay it in her bosome,
 and draw forth her breath unto it : Thus doth the Fa-
 ther of mercies do ; though he may suffer his children
 to be brought into great and pressing calamities, and to
 lie crying for some time upon the ground ; yet do not
 conclude, that God hath cast away his people ; and cast
 off all care over them ; no, hear at what a rate of love
 he speaks ; how he useth affection with a tender Mother,
 and outvieth her, *Isa. 49. 14. Zion said, the Lord hath for-*
saken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me ; but what is the
reply ? can a woman forget her sucking child, that she could
not have compassion on the son of her womb ? Mothers usually
have more tenderness, and their affections put forth
greater strength to their Babes, then Fathers do ; There-
fore the question is not, can a man forget, but can a
woman ? again, it is not, can this or that woman ? ---
but indefinitely, can any woman ; yea, the tenderest of
that sex : again, it is not, can a woman forget her Child ?
that she may, a little, when nursed at anothers womans
breast, but her Child, that drawes life and love from her
own breasts ? and then too, when it lies at her breasts,
and she feeds it with her own blood ? again, it is not, can
a woman forget a sucking child, another womans child,
to whom she is onely nurse ? though this engageth much,
and much love runs through the milky veins, even to
the child of a stranger, yet shee may forget it ; but it is,
a sucking child, which is the son of her own womb ?
may further, it is not can a woman forbear to kiss, or
can she at any time refuse to dandle her child in her
armes ?

armes? no, but can she forget, or, can she withhold maternal compassion from it? can she expose it? can she shut up her bowels so, that she cease all expressions of care and compassion towards it? which, in women, in Mothers, in wives, in chaste and loyal wives, is very rare, if possible: yet, be it so; should a mother, one of a thousand be found, so hard hearted, and unnatural, to forget her sucking child, the son of her womb; yet, will not I forget thee, no, *Jer. 31. 20. Ephraim is my dear son* (all Gods sons are dear to him) *he is a pleasant child.* All Gods children are children of his delights, so the *Heb.* reads it, *since I speak against him*, or chide him, for all afflictions are the rebukings and chidings of God; *I do earnestly remember him still*; I have not forgot him, nor the affections of a father unto him, though I have dealt a little roughly with him, and left him a little in a distressed condition: *My bowels are troubled for him*, like a tender Mother, that bears her Child company with her own tears, whilst she is correcting of him; she whips him, and weeps over him, and draws more tears with the rod from her own eyes, then, she does bloud from the flesh of her crying child: so 'tis with God, his bowels sound louder then his blows; and whilst he punisheth as a Judge, he pitieth as a father: and, as it is with a mother, when she hath whipp'd her child, she speaks it fair, sets it upon her knees, and dries its cheeks and eyes again with her own lips; so the Lord, when he hath lash'd his *Ephraim*, takes him into his armes, and says, peace my dear son, be quiet my pleasant Child, *for I will surely have mercy upon thee, misereundo miserebor*, an Elegant *Hebraisme*, implying the certainty of mercy from the Lord to his *Ephraims*: but when will the Lord have mercy upon them? will he hasten his help? will he speed his supplies? yes, have you never seen a tender mother, what haste she makes, when the shrill ourcries of her fallen child sound sadly in her ears, so *Isa. 31. 5. As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem*; the Lords mercies are as bird upon the wing, they mount high, farre

farre above all opposition, and they fly swiftly, not to be overtaken by the malice of man, nor succours, prevented by the pollicie and power of Hell: O! how doth this sweeten that bitter cup, which is in the hand of an afflicted Saint! how doth this support and stay up a sinking spirit! how doth this charge folly and falshood upon wicked men, who cry out against the Saints, in the day of their distress; God hath forsaken them, the Lord hath cast them off; and how doth this comfort with that great truth, spoke unto in this Treatise? *viz.* That the appearances of God are eminent and immediate, certain & sudden, to the help of his people in their distressed estate: For ever then, let all black mounthes be stopped from belching forth reproaches against the Saints, charging them to be the greatest sinners, hypocrites, and forsaken of God, because they meet with many and sore afflictions in this valley of tears.

2. This reproves those who strengthen themselves with the arm of flesh, and lean upon the creature, when afflictions overtakes them; *that forsake the fountain of living waters, and heep out unto themselves cisterns, even broken cisterns, that will hold no water; the choicest creature-enjoyment is leaking; sin hath perforated the creature, and fill'd it full of chinks, so that, all that comforting, healing, helping, satisfying, and relieving good, wherewith God fill'd the creature at its first creation, leak's out, untill sin be pardoned, and the leaks be stopped by Gods own hand.* This then speaks the great folly of men to lay any expectancy of help from the creature; yet, what more usuall? Many men, as they charge their sufferings upon the creature, so they expect help, in their sufferings, from the creature. This was *Asa's* sin, that, in his disease, he sought not to the Lord, but to the Physicians, *2 Chron. 16. 12.*

It is not simply evil to seek to Physicians, but commanded, and commendable: but *Asa's* sin was this, that he sought not the Lord, *quia in medicis*, so the *Hebr.* is rendered, because he trusted in the Physicians, and concluded,

concluded, he should have health and help from them : it is worthy observation, that *Rapha*, which signifies a Physician, is used also for a Gyant, *Deut. 2. 26. that also was accounted a land of Gyants, Rephaim* ; Gyants were very proud, and trusted much in their own strength ; *David* tells the *Philistine* Gyant, that he came out against him, with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield, *1 Sam. 17. 45.* implying his trust in his arms, and arms of flesh, as the *Antithesis* or opposite termes do shew, but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts ; and is not this very much the fault of Physicians ? do not men bear themselves very high upon their learning, skill and experiences ? do they not boast, what cures they have wrought ? in what desperate cases they have been successful ? how they have raised up Patients from the very gates of the grave ? and to one that comes to a sick person in the name of the Lord, that attempts a cure in the strength of God ; ten may be found, I fear, who come with a sword, with a spear, and with a shield, who attempt great things in their own strength, rest more upon their own experience, then Gods Providences, and give more to their own prescriptions, then to divine presence ; which may become reason, why the Lord puts such new and various distempers into old diseases, as Agues and Feavers, that he may beset that generation of men, who are so wise in their own eyes ; and this may be one cause, why, in ordinary cases, they so often miscarry, being therefore called *Rephaim*, because, through their rashness, and in-advertency, they send so many of their patients, *El-Rephaim*, unto the dead, so 'tis, used *Psal. 88. 10. Shall the dead arise, and praise thee*, *Prov. 2. 18.* It has been very common for men to place much trust in the power and promises of Gyants, and to expect great things from them. How did the *Philistines* repose upon their great *Goliath* ? *1 Sam. 17. 8, 9.* offering themselves to be *Israel's* servants, if any *Israelite* was able to conquer their *Champion* in a single duel : O, how do too many hang their hopes of health and recovery upon the Physicians skill !

M m

Job 9. 13.

if they can get but such and such a Doctour to their bed-sides, they presently conceit themselves well, at least, in a safe way for Recovery : This is a fault in both, whereby an encroachment is made upon God, and he robbed of his glory : may not that question be put in this case, 2 Kings 1. 3. *Is it not, because there is no God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub the God of Ekron?* alas ! *Galen* himself is but a *Baal-zebub*, as to the perfecting of any cure, without the blessed presence of the God of Israel ; *Asa* sinned, in trusting to the skill of an *Israhelish* Physician, as well as *Abaziab* in sending to enquire of his recovery of the God of *Ekron* : 'tis dangerous to rely upon means, though the best of means ; we are commanded, in trouble, to call upon God ; but if we trust in our prayers, or expect help and health from them, we sin, and have little ground to expect safety : The ark was a signe of Gods presence ; and even *Jordan* it self was fordable ; when the feet of the Priests, who bare the Ark of the Covenant, came to the brink of the river ; yet, when the *Israelites* in a defeature by the *Philistines* Army, imputed their overthrow to the absence of the Ark, and therefore, sent for the Ark into the camp ; making the earth rings, with their loud acclamations of joy, at the approach of it, putting themselves into the hazzard of a new battel, under the protection of that sacred standard ; they made but a bad bargain, for they were again smitten with a very great slaughter, and the Ark of God taken, 1 Sam. 4. 3. unto the 12 verse. Much more might be added, to shew the danger of resting upon man and means ; but this hath been fully spoke to already, in a former Use.

3. If this be true ; that God appears to the help of his people, in the day of their distress ; then blame may be justly charged upon those, who will not wait for help from God ; who discover impaciency of spirit in an evil day, if help do not suddenly come, many men have paid dearly for it : *Sant* had much to say for himself,

himself, *The Philistines were gathered against him in great numbers, Israel was scattered from him, and Samuel stayed his time appointed*, 1 Sam. 30. 8. compared with 1 Chron. 10. 8. and yet because he waited not for help in Gods way, and at Gods time, *Samuel tells him, ver. 13. that he had done foolishly*; --- and ver. 14. *that his kingdom should not continue*; It is observable, *verse 10. that as soon as Saul had made an end of offering, behold, Samuel came*; Such is Mans Imprudent rashness, that he will not trail vail Gods pace, in the way of his own safety, but will whip and spur, and run full speed in ways of his own invention, though to his cost; when as it sometime falls out, that, so soon as he hath made all things ready to have deliverance in his own way, *Samuel comes*; God appears, opens a door of safety to him, and in a certain way of Providence would have secured him against all his fears; but now, because he waited not Gods time, the Lord refuseth help, and his own devices perish, and he with them: *The Israelites have left this truth writ in the blood of many of them, when they would not stay Gods leisure, but would to Canaan upon their own legs. Numb. 14. 44.* whereas, had they waited Gods time, he would have carried them thither in his own arms: *Jehoram sinned this way, when he broke out into such high language, 2 Kings 6. ult. Behold, this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any longer? Oh, this is a very great evil; a teeming womb that brings forth many ill-favoured brats:*

1. Unbelief is the issue of impaciency; he that believeth, doth not make haste, *Isa. 28. 16.* Faith will not make more haste then good speed; it will not outrun the Constable, but stay till the Promise speaks', *Isa. 8. 17. I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will wait for him*, I'll not stirre a foot from the Promise, nor step aside from the rule to any carnal shiftings, but wait for help till God brings it; but, where there is an evil heart of unbelief, it departs from God; leaves him

him) and his wayes, if he be put to overmuch waiting.

2. Discontented murmurings are the products of impatience, if help comes not at the nick of time, when 'tis looked for, then men are apt to let fly in the very face of God: What petulancy and peevishness of spirit did Israel once and again discover in their murmurings in *Egypt*, and in the wilderness? and what was the ground of their quarrel? why, because they were kept longer in *Egypt*, and longer out of *Canaan*, then they had a minde to stay: Hence the Apostle cautions the *Corinthian* Christians to beware of this sin, 1 *Cor.* 10. 10. *Neither murmur ye as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer*; and then antidote's them against this distemper, *ver.* 13. First, By asserting that affliction is the common lot and portion of all the Saints. Secondly, that no affliction of theirs was so signall and singular, but; that others have had the same. Thirdly, That God will support his sufferers under all their afflictions, he will bear up the weight of the building, with his own buttresses. Fourthly, That succours and salvation will come from the Lord unto them, and therefore dehorts them from repining, and exhorts to a patient waiting for the Lord, in his own way, and at his own time.

3. When men are impatient under afflictions, they usually step aside into unlawfull wayes, and rush upon unwarranted courses: 'tis hard to retain an impatient Person from tasting the forbidden fruit; 'tis hard to keep his unruly spirit within the bounds of duty and obedience: *Saul* broke the bonds when *Samuel* outstayed his time; and therefore, 1 *Sam.* 13. 9. he will needs wear a linnen Ephod, at least, invade the Priests Office, in offering burnt-offerings, and hath his excuse ready to shift off the blame, and palliate his offence, *ver.* 11, 12. *Because that I saw, that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the dayes appointed, and that, the Philistines gathered themselves together to Michmash; therefore said I, the Philistines will come*

come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord : I forced my self therefore, and offered a burnt offering. O then, take heed of impatency, wait upon the Lord in your distresses, wait his time, and wait for help in his wayes : Do not limit the Holy One of Israel : Do not preoccupate the Lord, lest you forsall your open markets, and forsake your own mercies : This is recorded, as a provoking sin in Israel, *Psalm* 78.41. That they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel ; desiggnant, they prescribed to him, and set him bounds, which he must not pass, and this was done. First, By questioning his power, *vers.* 20. Can God help in such a straight ? can God deliver from such a distress ? will the Lord make windows in Heaven, and rain down bread, to supply in so great a famine ? as the unbelieving Noble-man suggested, *2 Kings* 7.1.--- 2. God is limited, when his will is circumscribed ; as if he was bound to serve mens lusts : If *Manna* come to be loathed as light meat, Quails must be sent, though they die with the meat, in their mouths, *vers.* 30,31.--- 3. When men appoint God, what means he shall use to accomplish and perfect their deliverance by : thus Israel will acquaint God, and herein limit him, that the only means of their safety lay, in having a King to fight their battels for them, *1 Sam.* 8.20.--- 4. In limiting God his time ; he must come in with succours, as, in their wayes, so, in their time ; and, if *Jehovah* mis but a minute, if he out-stay the time designed by them, then they swell, look big, and grow impatient, and, with *Jehoram*, They will wait for the Lord no longer ; *2 Kings* 6.33. I, but see how Israel sped for their limiting, and setting down bounds to the Lord, why, *Psalm* 78.59,60. When God beard this, their carnal-arguings, sinfull murmurings, and froward resolutions, because God would not serve their turns in every point, he was wroth, and greatly

greatly abhorred Israel : Oh ! 'tis a sad thing to be a Person or People of Gods abhorrence : therefore wait, and be silent : 'tis the Prophets counsel, and very seasonable in the case propounded, *Zech. 2. 13. Be silent, O all flesh before the Lord : for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.*

4. This grand Consideration, That God doth seasonably and fully appear to the help of his people, in the day of their distress, draws up a high charge against those, who have experienced this truth, and do not keep up Records of their deliverances, and preservations; who retain not a sense and remembrance of the great mercies of God towards them, neither give him the glory of them : It is a common saying, and grown proverbial; that *Injuries are engraven in brass, but curtesies are written upon the sands*; with, there was not a truth in this : It seems, it was true amongst the Israelites, God had done them many a good turne, the Prophet gives a large Catalogue of them, in *Psal. 106. 13. They soon forgot his works, they made hast to forget them; they were walk'd off with the next tide; they had the Lientery, which is a kind of Flux in the stomach, not retaining, nor concocting the meat which is received, but for want of due heat, and a retentive quality in the stomach, the meat passeth suddenly away raw and undigested, and the parts of the body receive little or no nourishment from the choicest food : Truly, most men have this spiritual Lientery; their memories are so fluid and slippery, that the choicest mercies and deliverances make but a little stay upon them, neither is there a due proportion of that noble and sacred heat, whereby they may be concocted and turned into spiritual Chyle, and nourishment : How wan and weak, how crazy and consumptive are many mens soules, notwithstanding all those choice dainties of Providences, and Ordinances God hath spread their tables with ! and whence is this*

this leanness and littleness ? whence comes it, that the mercies of God bred no more noble and generous spirits in many persons ? sure it proceeds from that unhappy flux that most are subject unto : If we could retain a right sense of eminent mercies upon our hearts, there would be a better concoction, we should be more lively, and more spirituell in our returns unto God, and in our actions for God : The Lord lays this much to heart, and it kindles great displeasure in him, *Hos. 13. 5, 6.* The Lord rub's up *Ephraim's* memory, and tells him, *I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought, God knew them ; First, In respect of their sinnes, to visit for them : Secondly, In regard of their wants ; to provide for them : The History of Gods Justice, and his Providence, whilst Israel was in the wilderness speaks fully to both these : A very large account may be given of the eminent and glorious acts of the Lords bounty and goodness to them, when they were in a low condition ; Read Mr. Burroughs Notes upon the place ; where he enumerates many ; But now, when God had brought them through *Jordan*, and possessed them of *Canaan*, that they were filled, and filled (it is repeated,) in that flesh and fat pasture, their heart was exalted, and they forgot God ; But how doth the Lord take this ? why see, Therefore will I be unto them as a Lion, as a Leopard in the way, will I observe them, I will meet them as a Bear robbed of her whelps (sure there must needs be great displeasure, when the Father of mercies puts on the nature of such fell and fierce beasts) and I will rent the caul of their heart, and there will I devour them like a Lion ; the wilde beast shall tear them : Put all the dreadfulness of all the creatures in the world together, and all that is in the wrath of God : O dreadfull consideration ! who knoweth the power of thy wrath ? Some thinke these wilde beasts do point to the 4 Monarchies, by which God determined in after times to punish this people, as *Dan.* roughs, in 7-3. The *Babylonish* Empire was set forth by a Lion, the *locum.* *Persian* by a Bear, the *Grecian* by a Leopard, and the *Roman**

Note.

Roman by the Wilde beast: --- so that Israels case must needs be sad, when they are given as a prey to these beasts, and this is engraven as an Epitaph upon their Grave-stones. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self* --- O, lay this to heart, and forget not the mercies of the Lord unto you.

5. Those are reprovved, who, though they remember the mercies of God, tell large stories of their eminent preferuations, and seem to be much affected in reporting of them, which signifies little in Gods account, yet they do not live up unto them, they do not receive any teaching from them more to engage their hearts to God, but live as loolly, and as much off from God, as to any real actings for God, as though they were under no extraordinary Obligation unto God, which is a brand upon them, and notes out a very dis-ingenuous and unworthy spirit. Vocal thankfulness is the least part of gratitude; the whole man should be wholly taken up in the duty, it is not the water which passeth through a single spout, that will turn this great wheel, but the full stream, which through many pipes flows from the fountain; *All that is within me praise his holy name*; *David* thought, the all of his soul in every faculty, little enough for that great work, *Psal.* 103. 4. nay, too little; and so *Psal.* 116. 9. he saies, *I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living, indefiniter ambulabo*: I will not onely take a turn or two with God, but will walk constantly, to the end of the race, thorough the exercise of every grace, the faithfull discharge of every duty, the conscionable performance of every service, yea, though all the Acts, and parts, and methods of Religion, and all this he engageth, as a Testimony of his thankfulness to God for eminent mercy, in that full and memorable deliverance, which he obtained happily, in the desert of *Man.* 2 *Sam.* 23. 25, 26. When God fetched off *Saul* who had begirt *David* and his men, with his Army, where he was in eminent danger, to have been surpris'd, had not the Lord in way of seasonable Providence alarum'd *Saul* by the *Philistines*, who

who then invaded the land : This was a right improvement of such a mercy : But alas ! How few be there, who tread in *David's* steps ? who act up with such resolution and fixedness of spirit for God, under the sense of admirable and obliging Providences ? How little are Providences taken notice of ? how little are they improved by most, so as to quicken them up to more activity for God ? are there not many, who steal, murder, commit adultery, and swear falsely, as though they were delivered to do all these abominations ? *Jer. 7. 9, 10.* do they not act as high in waies of sin as ever ? It is with many in this point, as it is with some vapouring tradesmen, who live and spend all in riot and luxury, till they are clap'd up by their Creditours ; but when their friends have compounded for them, procured their enlargement, and given them a trading stock again, they promise fair, and fair, what good husbands they will be, and tucke hard to their trades for a while ; but within a short space, they forget their poverty, and imprisonment, and lash out again as much as ever : so 'tis with many men, who, being brought off by the Lord from some pressing calamity, they speak good words, and carry it very well for a little time ; but then they break out into the same excess of sin and vanity, as ever ; what a sudden and strange work was upon Israel, when God had set them upon drie land, *Exod. 15. 31.* yet *Moses* and *Miriam* had scarcely finished their *Psalm* of praise, when Chap. 15. 24. *The people murmured, and shake big against God* : O take heed of this spirit, lest the Lord swear unto you in his wrath, as he did to Rebellious Israel, that you shall not enter his rest ; I shall shut up this Use with that *Memento* of the Apostle, *Jude* verse 5. *I will therefore put you in remembrance, how the Lord, having saved the people out of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not* ; that acted not up by faith, to those mercies received ; that improved not those advantages of mercy and providential Administrations, which the Lord had put into their hands, in subserviency to his glory, and

their own establishment, in that inheritance, the Grant whereof God had given to their forefathers: Ah friends! we have much of Israels blood in our veins, of Israels impatience, murmuring, rebellion, and dil-igenity upon our spirits: Our feet have often stood upon the brink of *Jordan*, and yet we have not passed over into our land of Rest; at least, the *Canaanites* are still in the Land: O take heed of Infidelity, and unsuitable returns after such signal and astonishing Deliverances, both personal, and National; lest the *destroyer* come amongst us, and disinherit us; but let us all learn the minde of God in these glorious Transactions, live up unto them, and acknowledge, before Angels and men, that, *Unless the Lord had been our Help, our soules had dwelt in Silence.*



FINIS.



A Table of Errata's.

Page 2. l. 32. read	unskillfull	r. <i>mischief</i> & <i>mis-</i> <i>ed</i>
seasonableness.	ib. 12. r. expert	133. 21. r. unfruitable
p. 4. l. 16. r. people.	p. 68. 5. r. flashed	154. 34. for exact, r.
6. r. <i>Jer</i> . 45.		cast.
ib. last, add h to the	70. 9. r. once of you	163. 16. r. looked
first word.	71. r. that, in the mar-	164. 27. r. praiseth
7. 10. leave out And	cond head	178. 18. r. heart-com-
12. 8. r. on	ib. 35. add us	muning
14. 2. leave out, o-	72. 25. r. begin	176. 39. r. discomfited
ver against the	to raise	181. 2. r. woofe
sea.	ib. 29. r. ye cham-	184. 31. r. feats
24. 21. r. <i>Dew</i> . 4. 37.	pions	189. 32. r. get
26. 4. add a to gain	ib. 1. 30. r. Christ's	194. 15. r. <i>proprium</i>
28. 17. r. his	ib. 34. r. sealed	211. 22. r. of their
ib. 32. r. confureth	74. 24. r. <i>psal</i> . 107	224. II, <i>dele</i> . Bur
32. 35. r. unto holiness	ib. 30. r. <i>census</i>	228. 27. r. fetters
32. 12. r. habitation	78. 27. r. <i>If they have</i>	237. 23. r. <i>lla</i> . 43.
33. 30. r. <i>Cant</i> . 8.	<i>wearied thee in the</i>	241. 12. leave out
35. add me, in the	<i>land of peace, then</i>	Next
margin.	<i>what wilt thou do in</i>	ib. 21. r. discaised
35. 30. r. is	<i>the swelling of</i> <i>Jo-</i>	ib. 24. r. <i>dele</i> not
36. 1. r. appearances	<i>dan</i> ? <i>Jer</i> . 12. 5.	242. 29. r. waxed
37. 36. r. commented	89. 9. r. beam	ib. 38. r. saw
40. 20. r. I <i>Kings</i>	90. 7. r. cues	<i>Dedica or damnationis</i>
ib. 22. r. means of safety	ib. 34. r. rescuing.	<i>Christianorum</i> ? is to
41. 25. r. creature	92. 14. r. <i>Uzzab</i> .	be placed in the
42. 18. r. undo	100. 7. r. <i>Ezek</i> . 9.	Margin of 242.
43. 30. r. a tempting	102. 35. r. discourseth	243. 12. r. change
46. 32. r. was	103. 5. r. Witches,	247. 18. <i>dele</i> as
55. 24. r. iust com-	Samuel	ib. 25. r. your
plaints	ib. r. I <i>Sam</i> . 28.	251. 34. r. phyticians
56. 3. r. of Jesus	106. II. read <i>nephesi</i>	253. 7. r. was to
59. 25. Leave out the	107. 15. r. the praises	ib. 38. r. your
first, <i>yea</i>	of the Lord	257. 22. add, the
60. 6. leave out, those	109. 25. r. and with	greatest sinners
62. 13. leave out, our	his own arm	269. 25. r. <i>Dnegs</i>
64. r. <i>cucurrimus</i>	121. 35. r. <i>ghnal-banin</i>	262. 17. vieth
64. 14. r. unite	122. 4. r. quier	267. 3. r. I <i>Sam</i> . 13. 8.
65. 30. r. <i>Salvianus</i>	122. 4. in the Margin	and I <i>Sam</i> . 10. 8.
66. 6. r. how raw and		